



## **Hospital Column for September 1, 2010**

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# **IWLS adds non-surgical option and supplements**

### **Surgical weight loss program trend**

Innovative Weight Loss Solutions first began changing the lives of morbidly obese patients in October 2000. Leading this, the first surgical weight loss program in the state, was general surgeon Charles Bollman, M.D., who was one of the first surgeons trained to do gastric bypass for weight loss purposes. Since then, the general and laparoscopic surgeons at Geary Community Hospital have performed 946 Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgeries, 109 LAP-BAND surgeries, and one revision for a total of 1,056 surgeries. Today, Fouad Hachem, M.D., a fellowship-trained laparoscopic bariatric surgeon, performs most of the bariatric surgeries laparoscopically.

Most patients have an option between the aggressive gastric bypass surgery and the less invasive LAP-BAND surgery. Ronda Bradley, director of IWLS, sees a trend toward more LAP-BAND surgeries and fewer gastric bypasses primarily because LAP-BANDs are performed on an outpatient basis and are reversible. The band is also adjustable to accommodate variations in lifestyles (such as a big vacation or pregnancy) and involves a simple office visit with the surgeon after the initial surgery. Weight loss is not as fast as with gastric bypass, Bradley said, but compliant patients get there at about the same pace as with a regular diet.

### **Non-surgical weight loss program begins**

Finally, there is a proven weight loss program for people with health insurance that doesn't cover weight loss surgery or who don't qualify medically for gastric bypass or LAP-BAND. Back on Track (BOT) is a fee-based, six-week program that stops carbohydrate cravings and starts an exercise program. BOT is administered through the Innovative Weight Loss Solutions (IWLS) office at Geary Community Hospital.

BOT was originally designed to help surgical weight loss patients who lost weight initially, but who found they were slipping into bad eating habits again. BOT gets them back on track, literally. Participants don't have to be surgical weight loss patients to enroll in the program. Bradley said the program offers encouragement, support, resources and education to help anyone meet and maintain their weight loss goals.

After an initial body assessment and goal setting, facilitators help participants exchange bad habits for good, start strength training and follow a four-step nutrition program. Weekly educational sessions provide group support centering not just on weight loss, but the whole person, including health and fitness, mental and emotional health, relationships, career and finance, and spiritual selves. Participants can attend in person or via telephone.

For information on getting started with Back on Track, call Bradley at 785-762-4500 or toll-free at 877-260-3064.

### **Nutritional Supplements**

The GCH Home Medical Equipment store at 1310 W. Ash (rear entrance) now carries Bariatric Advantage nutritional supplements. These high quality vitamins, minerals, protein shakes and protein bars aren't just for bariatric patients. The basic nutritional ingredients help anyone who wants to be healthier while enjoying good tasting supplements.

The supplements are easy to ingest and come in chewable, lozenges and liquids forms. For example, there are chewable iron supplements that Bradley claims taste great and do not require the additional stool softeners required with traditional iron tablets. The protein shakes and bars are high in protein, low in carbs and taste great. Call the store at 762-2983 for a complete list of the nutritional supplements or drop by during business hours.