

WEIGHING IN FEBRUARY 2011

Can I Restart My Weight Loss Program?

Our staff at The Weigh Station gets this question quite frequently. A lot of patients feel that they're not able to restart their weight loss at The Weigh Station because they have dropped off the program. Or, they cannot restart after they have deviated from what they have learned and went back to their old habits. Old habits are hard to break. Everyone knows that it is what you do with the information learned that makes the difference.

When The Weigh Station was started five years ago, we were determined to see that patients kept their weight off for life. Unfortunately, there are multiple reasons that people fail and restart time and time again. The point is not to make it a habit. One common reason for restarting is falling back into old habits and losing the accountability and support offered here. Indulging occasionally in seemingly harmless trigger foods can quickly snowball into detrimental weight gain because these foods are addictions.

Addiction is a complicated multi-factorial disorder. You can be addicted to not only vices such as alcohol and tobacco but also food. There is no cure for addiction, it is something that needs to be managed for the rest of your life. The good news is, you can turn non food addictions into positive things. The key is to focus on what you need to do to keep yourself on track. For example, set goals; I will exercise 30 minutes a day, or I will read a good book every month. Over time these may become healthy addictions that help distract you from your food addictions.

The Weigh Station staff and the Physicians here want you to be successful. If you go back to the first page of the book it says "never visit us as a patient again". We are committed to that. We want you to be successful. We want you overcome your failures and manage your food addictions and avoid deviating back to old eating habits.

It is also important to hold yourself accountable (and to get help when you need it). Many believe they can manage on their own and stop coming for weigh ins only to find that they are back up 40 pounds. They then make excuses "I've always been fat. I guess this won't work for me" ...yet they had lost over 40 pounds while following the program where they had the support and accountability needed. Excuses like "I've always been fat" can be addictions too.

To be fair, there is something to be said about trying again and again. Did you know that it takes the average person in America eight times before they are successful? Many patients who have restarted come back with less weight to lose and continue to make headway. Each time they are more determined..... Nothing is wrong with that.

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It is said of Thomas Edison..

Thomas Edison's teachers said he was "too stupid to learn anything." He was fired from his first two jobs for being "non-productive." As an inventor, Edison made 1,000 unsuccessful attempts at inventing the light bulb. When a reporter asked, "How did it feel to fail 1,000 times?" Edison replied, "I didn't fail 1,000 times. The light bulb was an invention with 1,000 steps.

Each of you are making a step towards permanent weight management. It only is the beginning when you first walk through the door. The staff at The Weigh Station are behind you 100%. Everything you are doing to succeed including needing to restart where you left off is admirable. It is a commitment to keep trying. Nothing is wrong with that!!!!.

If you are restarting The Weigh Station program please do not be discouraged by looking at your weight, or inches or even at weight gained. The program works for you very well in the beginning and will continue to work for you as you progress toward your goal.

Thank you all for allowing us to participate in your health care we honor the respect that you've given us, and we are committed to your on going success.

Chuck Shaffer, MD



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- Ask questions about the program



Understanding Special Nutrient Requirements after Bariatric Surgery:

Congratulations on taking steps toward improving your health. If you are here at The Weigh Station after having Bariatric surgery, chances are you are frustrated with the results from the surgery. Many perceive that once the surgery is over that you will keep the weight off. Unfortunately many regain the weight and develop other nutritional deficiencies after the surgery leaving them in worse shape than before.

Bariatric patients have special nutrient needs because when you shorten the small intestine, the ability to absorb nutrients is limited. Not only will you be ingesting less food, less of it will be absorbed which can leave you with nutrient deficiencies. This article will help you understand why vitamin and mineral supplementation is vital to your health after surgery!

Have you felt weak or tired even months after your surgery? Chances are you may need iron. Limited iron absorbability is common after bariatric surgery because the top portion of the intestine that's bypassed is the area responsible for iron absorption. Iron deficiency anemia, or microcytic anemia, may occur unless the person is supplementing with iron. Symptoms of anemia may include weakness, depression, fatigue, hair loss, lowered immunity, restless leg syndrome and pica. Pica is a condition in which a person craves non food items such as chalk, ice, dirt. A simple blood test of Hemoglobin and or Hematocrit can check for this.

Vitamin C is also important to include since it aids in the absorption of iron. It is also an antioxidant that aids in the reduction of oxidative stress which can be protective against cancer. Approved food sources of vitamin C in stage 2 of our program include red pepper, parsley, broccoli, brussels sprouts, oranges, cauliflower, berries, spinach, cabbage (raw), and grapes.

Fatigue could also be in part due to a B12 deficiency. B12 absorption is limited because after surgery the presence of intrinsic factor which is released in the cells of the stomach lining (needed for B12 absorption) is decreased. This can lead to a different form of anemia known as pernicious anemia. The symptoms are much like those of iron deficiency anemia including; fatigue, poor concentration and or shortness of breath. B12 deficiency can also lead to neurological problems. Symptoms of these problems include confusion, dementia, loss of the sense of balance and tingling in the hand and feet. The neurological complications of B12 are irreparable so it's important to have your levels checked. In addition, Folate should also be included in your supplement regimen since it can also cause anemia, and can mask a vitamin B-12 deficiency.

Vitamin deficiencies not only make you feel weak, they can make your bones weak too. Bone health is also a concern after having gastric bypass because calcium is absorbed in the section of the intestine that is often removed. After gastric bypass, it is important to supplement with calcium and vitamin D to prevent osteoporosis. (Remember that calcium will not be absorbed without vitamin D so you need to take them together.) In addition, new research shows that vitamin D also plays an important role in cancer prevention, improvement of blood glucose management, weight loss and is protective against cognitive decline. Much of the population is deficient in vitamin D due to the limited intake of vitamin D rich foods in our society (liver) and the avoidance of sun light due to fear of skin cancer.

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For continued weight maintenance and overall health consider including a B vitamin complex, they work together aiding in the body's ability to convert carbohydrates into energy. They are also essential for proper heart and muscle function. Proper supplementation is most critical in the first few weeks following bariatric surgery if persistent vomiting occurs. Thiamin (B1) deficiency is associated with beriberi, rare in normal circumstances this illness remains a potential hazard for surgical weight loss patients. Since your dietary intake is reduced and your body cannot store large amounts of thiamin (enough for about 3 weeks), it is possible to suffer a deficiency.

Overall gut health should also be addressed, if you are experiencing dumping syndrome or malabsorption a pro-biotic as well as glutamine in powder form could help.

If you have any questions feel free to speak to one of our Physician's or Registered Dietitian.

-Tricia Foley, MS, RD

Fitness Corner:

Hi, my name is Javan Baldwin and I am proud to be the newest member of the Weigh Station team. Everyone one of us is dedicated to your continued success. As a Health Fitness Specialist with the ACSM, it is my job to assist you in maintaining your healthy weight through physical exercise. With that in mind, let's begin by answering the question "**What is Physical Exercise?**" The typical textbook definition goes something like this; Exercise is any physical activity **designed** to produce **measurable results** in the areas of **personal health, wellness and physical fitness**. For clarity, I am going to break this statement down starting with the word "**designed**."

To design something means you have put thought and planning into it. This must be true of any exercise program! Let's use an example. Pretend you are in a large city and you need to get to a grocery store. If you don't know where you are starting from or where you're going, you could end up driving all over the city and never get where you want to be. But, if you take the time to locate the nearest grocer and plot the best route then you will easily be able to find your way. The same is true with your personal fitness and this is where I come in. I am personally going to meet with each Weigh Station patient to show you your own personal path towards your goals.

The next term to define is "**measurable results**." Measurable results means you know where you are starting from and you can track your progress to your goal. Using the same example, this would mean you know exactly how far away the store is and how long it will take you to get there. Having measurable results will let you track exactly where you have been and how far you have to go.

Finally, let's define "**personal health, wellness and physical fitness**." These are a bit harder to define because they are different for each of us. For some people personal health means preventing sickness. For others it could mean the postponing of symptoms. Your wellness is linked to your health but could also relate to your frame of mind and how you feel about yourself. Physical fitness is also very individualized, it could mean how fast you can run or it could be how far you can walk. The point I want to make is that these terms are very personal and unless we can define them it will not be possible to **design** anything with **measurable results**.

Let me help you find the right path by calling the Weigh Station and setting up your appointment (even if you've strayed a bit).

Sincerely,

Javan Baldwin HFS, ACSM

Recipes of the Month

Stage 2: CELERY SEED DRESSING

1/4 cup cider vinegar
1/2 cup Truvia
1 teaspoon celery seed
1 teaspoon dry mustard
1 teaspoon paprika
salt to taste
1/4 teaspoon dry minced onion
1 cup olive oil



Mix all of the ingredients except the oil in a small bowl. Gradually whisk in the oil until well blended; pour into a cruet. Chill and shake well before serving.

Makes about 1 1/4 cups or 20 tablespoons

Mahi-mahi (stage 2)

1 teaspoon olive oil
1/2 red onion, sliced
1 medium yellow squash, sliced
1 medium zucchini, sliced
1/2 (8 ounce) package of sliced mushrooms
1 C chicken broth
Salt and pepper to taste
4 (4 ounce) pieces of mahi mahi
Fresh thyme to taste
1 tbsp garlic (chopped)
2 tbsp spicy brown mustard (low sugar)



Directions: In a high-sided skillet over medium heat, add the olive oil. When hot, toss in the onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the remaining squash and zucchini, mushrooms, and broth and season with salt and pepper. Place the fish on the vegetables, season the fish with salt and pepper, cover, and steam until the fish is cooked through, about 10 minutes.

Remove the fish to a plate and cover to keep warm. Remove the vegetables with a slotted spoon to a bowl and cover to keep warm. Turn the heat on high and let the broth simmer, add the garlic and mustard and allow to cook until the sauce reduces and thickens, 3 to 5 minutes. .

Spoon the vegetables onto a plate and top with a piece of fish. Pour the sauce over the fish and enjoy!

A Weigh Station Success Story

Della's Story:

December 8th, 2009. There I was, almost 54 yrs old, weighing 509.6 pounds and barely able to walk, nervously waiting to meet the Doctor. For years, my entire family had been concerned about my how high my weight had gotten, but at that point I was totally overwhelmed and defeated; unable to do anything to help myself or even try to lose weight again on my own. One of my son's co-workers had lost 220 pounds since January, and told him about the medically-supervised weight-loss center, called The Weigh Station. Desperate for me to regain my health, he offered to pay for the entire program, if I would at least try it! Knowing very little about the program, I agreed to make an appointment and he had come with me to check it out. I was miserable, hopeless and broken, both physically and emotionally, from the tremendous weight I was carrying on my 5'6" frame! Having completed the paperwork, labs and the nurse's review of the program guidelines, I looked up as Dr. Shaffer came into the room.

Having experienced the unspoken rejection and judgment of others, I fully expected to see that same uncomfortable look of dread in his eyes, as he met me for the first time and saw how huge I was. On the contrary, Dr. Chuck Shaffer came in smiling, with the enthusiasm, positive energy, determination and drive of both a football coach and cheerleader, all wrapped up in one! He boldly declared that I wasn't his heaviest patient, and that he could "MELT ME" just like many others who had come before me! I listened in disbelief as he talked to me as if he knew exactly how I felt, what needed to be done in order to save my life, and exactly how to make it happen! He never seemed to have a shred of doubt! He practically oozed love and compassion! It was his belief that God had provided that both he and my son be there, "for such a time as this," in order to save my life. As Christians, we agreed that it was God who would enable me to stay on the weight-loss plan, and he also assured me that he and his staff pray for all their patients on a regular basis. As we talked, He asked what I wanted to weigh, in my 'heart-of-hearts,' and cautioned me not to say something silly, like 300 lbs! What did I REALLY want to weigh? I shared with him my lowest pre-pregnancy weight from 27 years ago, and the even lower weight that I had always wished I could be; a dream I had given up on many years ago. To my shock, he proceeded to set that lowest 'dream-weight' as my long-term goal! He confidently stated again, that he could "MELT ME" down to an ideal weight! I just shook my head in disbelief, and laughingly said, "Yeah, right!" His attitude was amazing! I couldn't even imagine losing 100lbs, and there he was, planning on helping me to lose over 350 pounds as if we were planning a walk in the park! No way did I believe it could happen to me! Fortunately, my doubt was matched by Dr. Shaffer's confidence that he had the answer I was looking for. He knew my life would soon be different! It was his charismatic confidence in the program and in my success, which planted that first seed of hope in my heart. He was soon to become my biggest cheerleader!

How did I, a reasonably intelligent, educated woman, ever get to be super-morbidly-obese? By dieting! During the past 30 years, I had lost 100 pounds or more, on at least three separate occasions, only to get sidetracked by the stress of life or an unexpected event. Repeatedly, I was unable to start losing weight again. Defeated, I inevitably returned to the same foods that my body craved and my eating habits of the past. The results of this behavior were always the same. By the time I had mustered up the courage to try again, I would have regained all the weight I had lost and more! Between 1984 and 1993, I had five children, and was never successful at controlling my weight during pregnancy. Following each birth, I would diet again, and the cycle of losing and gaining would repeat itself. No matter how many diets I tried, with varying degrees of success, I never learned why food, or should I say, "certain foods" had such a hold on me; nor did I ever really understand why I couldn't eat what everyone else was eating, without gaining weight.

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Although I was still skeptical that Dr. Shaffer could really “melt me” as he claimed, I committed to giving it a try. From day one, I focused on the plan 100%. I was careful not to stray the least little bit from the food-lists and portion guidelines, just to see what would happen! Just like he had said, the pounds started melting away; week after week the scales at The Weigh Station reported amazing results! Having begun on December 8th, my first month on the diet included Christmas and New Year’s! With total disregard for the holidays, I followed the eating-plan, took my medicines and supplements exactly as prescribed and went back to weigh each week. At the end of 4 weeks I had lost 32lbs! Still not convinced, but somewhat encouraged, I continued to weigh-in each week, stick to the eating guidelines, and after only six months my weekly losses had added up to 110lbs! As I continued to eat correctly, and follow all that Dr. Shaffer and Dr. Dums told me to do, the losses continued through the summer and the 2010 Holidays, for a current total loss of 170lbs! So, whether I believed him or not, it has become evident that Dr. Shaffer knew what he was talking about!

Sometimes people ask me if I have exercised a lot, and my answer has to be “no, I haven’t.” Although there are several excellent exercise classes offered at the Weigh Station, at 509lbs, just getting out of bed, getting dressed and making the trip to the office was a major accomplishment. At home, I would try to do some simple arm and leg exercises while sitting in a chair or lying down. Naturally, the more weight I lose, the more active I am becoming. My most meaningful physical achievement, to date, is being able to climb the flight of stairs in my own home!

In addition to opportunities for physical fitness, there are monthly Cooking Classes at The Weigh Station. During these evenings, our dietitian, Tricia Foley, prepares “Weigh Station friendly” recipes and shares important tips for continued healthy eating. Now that I am more mobile, I look forward to being able to participate in these classes, as well as the exercise programs offered.

Is being on the Weigh Station weight-loss plan always easy? Of course not! However, realizing now, that “quitting” is the only thing that can keep me from reaching my goal, I am pressing on! The support offered by the Weigh Station community helps me to be accountable for my actions and to stay faithful to the weight-loss program that has brought me this far. There is a support group for those who are in Phase I and II of the program and also a separate group for those who are on their maintenance program. Recently, an online support group has been formed, where members can ask questions, share ideas, and celebrate their weight-loss experiences on a daily basis. In addition to the peer support, I continue to be impressed by the positive spirit and affirmation that the Weigh Station staff offers each client, regardless of their level of need.

Even after losing 170 pounds, it is clear that my weight-loss journey has only just begun. I continue to gain confidence, knowing that I am not alone. Dr. Shaffer, Dr. Dums and all of the Weigh Station staff are available to help me face the challenges and adjustments that losing 350lbs will bring into my life. My plan for the future is to continue my appointments at The Weigh Station, “stick to the list,” and rely on The Lord’s power to overcome any obstacles along the way. After fourteen months of watching my weight go down and the pounds “MELT” away, I now gladly give Dr. Shaffer permission to say, “I told you so!”

Announcements

Join us for Lunch!

The next stage 2 cooking class will
be held on February 9th at 12 pm in
Christiansburg

See front desk for details!
