I am frequently asked, “What is the success rate of bariatric surgery?” While you might expect that I would rattle off a litany of numbers to prove my point that bariatric surgery is very successful, it is a question that I often find somewhat difficult to answer.

In other areas of medicine, for example, cancer care, the question of success rate of a medical intervention is measured by data such as “disease-free survival” or “five-year” survival. These are very objective types of data that may be easily quoted or plotted on a graph. While we do indeed have such data to present on bariatric surgery, I strongly believe that these numbers frequently fail to do justice to the impact bariatric surgery can have.

I love to ask the question of my patients six months or so after their surgery, “What is the best part about your life after weight loss?” The surgeon in me would expect answers such as, “My diabetes is gone!” or, “I no longer have to use that nasty CPAP machine!” or, “I only need one medication to control my blood pressure.” Surprisingly though, this usually is NOT the answer I get to that question.

It is far more common for patients to tell me about how their quality of life has changed after weight loss. I cannot begin to say how impactful it is to hear someone say in response to the question, “What is the best part about your life after weight loss?”…“I can enjoy life again” or, “I can play with my grandkids!” or, “I can live the life I always thought I should live!”

These subjective answers to my question represent the “unmeasurable” success of bariatric surgery. While it is awesome to quote rates of remission of diabetes after bariatric surgery, of resolution of obstructive sleep apnea and hypertension and GERD and hypercholesterolemia with weight loss, it is the stories of enhanced quality of life that is the real (untold) success story of bariatric surgery.

As a surgeon, an awesome feeling comes from helping someone in pain to feel better, or someone with cancer to have a shot at a long life. I must say, however, that nothing compares to the sense that I have helped someone along on the road to a better quality of life. I will continue to be asked by policy makers, insurance directors and others, “What is the success rate of bariatric surgery?” I will continue to voice that litany of numbers showing it to be a vital treatment for so many obesity-related diseases and for long term weight control. Deep down, though, I will know that the real success of bariatric surgery comes when people live the lives that they deserve.

-Dr. Michael Garren
Have you ever been told that snacking between meals was “bad?” Or have you ever thought that if you snacked between meals that you would gain weight? Those are just a couple of the reasons why many of us feel guilty if we get hungry or have any sensations to eat mid-morning or mid-afternoon. Often times, feeling hunger is a scary thing because it puts us in a vulnerable situation of having to make a decision about food, not to mention the pressure of trying to make a healthy choice. Let’s complicate things even more…after surgery you often don’t feel hungry. Now what? It would seem to make sense to not eat if you don’t feel hungry, right? Well, there is more to it than that, especially after surgery.

Healthy snacking is actually beneficial. The tricky part is that it needs to be planned as a part of your bariatric diet (diet meaning what you eat throughout the day…not the nasty four letter word). Small amounts of food between meals actually can reduce your intake of calories by reducing your appetite come meal time. It can also help stabilize your blood sugars, mood and energy levels, and if you have ever heard me talk about your metabolism, you know that it helps to “fuel the fire!” Waiting a long time between meals (in my opinion, longer than four hours) is a good way to put that “fire” out, meaning that your metabolism starts to get a little sluggish. Many of you have felt this before sometime mid-morning or mid-afternoon but likely ignored it for fear of gaining weight.

So what makes a good snack? To keep it simple and beneficial to your body, a fruit or vegetables with a lean protein are always healthy choices. This is a great way to help fill nutritional gaps since it can be really challenging to get in all your fruits and vegetables into a day (the general goal is to get in five fruits and vegetables per day). However, if you do the math, three meals + two mid-day snacks would give you five opportunities to get in a fruit or vegetable each time! That’s where the planning comes into play, because these foods don’t tend to be overly convenient. Snacking this way also helps you get into a habit of including a protein source at each meal and snack. I don’t need to go into how important protein is to your weight loss efforts, because you have all heard it enough. However, in case you forgot…protein is very important to your weight loss and weight maintenance, so be sure to include it at every meal and snack!

What is the difference between snacking and grazing? Grazing is when we nibble and pick at food in between our planned (there is that word again) meals and snacks. Grazing is often times done mindlessly when we are trying to procrastinate, de-stress, unwind, or simply find something to do with ourselves. The trouble with grazing is that it really undermines that amazing tool that you all have. It does this by allowing you to fly right under the radar so that you never get that signal; you know…the one that tells you when you are DONE eating! With no signal, you can keep nibbling and this leads to more calories which eventually leads to weight gain. Drinking with meals and snacks is also problematic for this reason because it can make you feel empty sooner than you would have normally and therefore it allows for more opportunities to graze. If you separate your liquids for the appropriate time, you shouldn’t really have room for more food for another three to four hours. For most of you, this is not earth shattering, breaking news. However, it is so important that it warrants repeating over and over again.
Recipe: 3-In-One Kale Protein Shake

Have you ever heard the saying, “kill 2 birds with one stone?” How about three birds with one stone? Remember the basic snack guidelines (protein source with a fruit and/or vegetable). This recipe, brought to you by one of your own, Beth W. (Gastric Bypass 7/2012), allows you to combine at least two of those things…three if you are really creative!

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup chopped kale
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 scoop of protein powder of your choice
- 2 tbsp flax seed meal
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp low or no-calorie sweetener, such as Truvia
- 1/2 cup ice
- Additional liquid and/or fruit, if desired

**Directions:**
Add kale, coconut milk, protein powder, flax seed, vanilla and sweetener to your blender. Blend on liquefy until well combined. Then add ice and blend again until ice is crushed to small pieces. Yields 1-2 standard servings.

**Additional suggestions from Beth:**
- Add 1/2 a banana or other fruit to get a protein, fruit and vegetable into one shake
- Add more liquid, such as water or fat free milk of your choice, to thin the shake (recommended if adding fruit)
- Double the protein powder if struggling to meet your protein goal of 60 grams/day
- Make it festive by adding mint extract for a healthy St. Patrick’s Day Shamrock Shake

**Nutritional Info**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving Per Recipe: 1</th>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories: 278.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat: 12.0 g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol: 25.0 mg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium: 185.3 mg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbs: 22.9 g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber: 10.6 g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein: 20.5 g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What doesn’t KALE you makes you stronger!
Even More Green Goodness!

Use this quick reference guide—along with Tami’s tasty tips—to get more create with adding fruits, vegetables, and other nutrients into your protein shakes. You may need to adjust quantities based on your tolerance, and to achieve desired thickness and calories.

**Tasty Tip:**
Calories—especially liquid calories—add up quickly. Unsweetened soy milk or plain water are always good bets. Be sure to check out the nutrition information on whatever you choose, and keep portions in check by using measuring tools.

**Tasty Tip:**
Start with a small amount of greens and work your way up. You may be surprised how different greens taste when blended with other flavors! Be open-minded about adding greens to breakfast shakes—there is no need to limit this nutritional powerhouse to when you’d ordinarily eat vegetables!

**Tasty Tip:**
You may want to start with 1/4 to 1/2 cup of fruit. If you are still early post-op, be mindful of seeds and that you don’t make the shake too thick. If your shake does end up too thick for your needs or is not sippable, simply add water and blend thoroughly.

**Tasty Tip:**
“Supercharge” your shake within reason. Start by adding one serving of a protein powder of your choice. Remember that calories add up quickly, so you might want to choose one or two optional additions that contain calories. For calorie-free options, stick to spices, extracts, or supplement powders.

**Tasty Tip:**
Be mindful of adding calories, especially those coming directly from sugar. Non-calorie sweeteners can be added if you prefer a sweeter shake.

**Tasty Tip:**
Make sure to let any bubbles settle. Use a cup with a small opening to drink out of if you are sensitive to smells. Remember, no straws allowed! Enjoy!
Summer is winding down. With the kids going back to school and the weather chilling down a bit, it seems natural to revisit my “to-do” lists and take an inventory of sorts of my life. Like my son’s room, life tends to get cluttered, sometimes to the point where it’s a challenge getting through the day, or week, or (in the case of my son) across his room, without slipping or tripping. So it’s with some degree of regularity (as seasons change) that I find myself pausing to look at my life.

Sometimes I’ll take a big sheet of blank paper, draw a line down the middle top to bottom then side to side, dividing it into four sections. I’ll label each section. One section may be labeled “PEOPLE,” another section “WORK,” another “FOOD” and the last one “DOWN-TIME.” In each section, I’ll write what’s in my life that helps me. I’ll do this for each of the four sections.

So I may write down in the PEOPLE sections:
- My boys
- My wife
- My old friend

Under the food section I may write:
- Daily breakfast
- Basket of fruit every week at work.

The greater its presence in my life, the closer it is to the center of the paper (where the lines bisect). So, my wife would be close to the center, and my old friend, toward the edge of the paper.

Then I’ll do the same thing, answering “what’s in my life that’s hurting me?” such as: the volume of my phone ringer, the lighting in my office, my negative in-law, junk food in the break room.

Finally, I’ll write down what I used to love, that’s not really in my life these days, such as: making pottery, camping, visiting an old friend, singing.....

These “missing” items will go on the outer aspects of my paper. I’ll usually use a different colored pen for each of the three categories (helps, hurts, and miss).

Lastly, I’ll draw a line from each of the words. The line will go either away from center (indicating I need this to be less central in my life), or toward center (indicating I need this to be more central in my life). The length or intensity of a line may reflect just how important moving this thing is.

Now, you may say, “Duh! Everything that I see as helping me should move closer, and that which hurts, should move away.” Quite true. But, when I do this, I realize that there are things I have little control over, like e-mails, or the fact that there are so many fast food traps between work and home. But then I see that there are some things I can move closer or further. And I see that even things like e-mail can move just a tad. A tad here and there really adds up.

Doing this also helps me to prioritize and to see all that is good and helpful in my life. And I may see some things that initially seems to be a helpful thing like listening to NPR on my way too and from work. Then, upon further reflection, see that it’s become a little too central in my life. So I draw a line from it, away from center. Not eliminating it, just a little less of it, making space for something else, even if that something is silence. Silence is something, I think, we all need more of.

In weight management, we talk a lot about having goals. I fully agree that having reachable goals are vital to holding on to your health. But sometimes, a goal can feel like just another thing you “have to do,” especially if your life has become too cluttered. Taking a moment to do this little exercise every few months, or at least once a year, is really more important than heaping more goals on top of your to-do list.

So take some time to pause, step back and look at your life. Contemplate what’s helping, what’s hurting, and what’s missing, so you can do a little readjusting, re-balancing and maybe de-clutter some. For me, it really is the first priority.

By Steve Heuer, Physician Assistant
Motivation & Willpower  By Dr. Scott Ritchie, Health Psychologist

Wouldn’t it be nice to have limitless willpower and all the motivation we could possibly want to do those challenging things in life? Unfortunately, willpower is like a pool of resources and when we have used a lot of it, it gets depleted.

I like to think of motivation as the engine that propels us up the hill to get to the things we want. It works best when we have a clear goal in mind or when we are taking steps consistent with important values we hold. And when there are emotions involved in the pursuit of those values or goals, it fuels the engine nicely.

So, how do those people with great self-control do it? Studies of people who manage their behavior effectively to meet their important goals show that they rely on willpower less than others. They don’t put themselves in endless situations that demand a lot of willpower and hope it holds out. Instead, they use their willpower selectively. They identify patterns of behavior that are going to serve them well in the long run and use their willpower to establish the patterns. Once the pattern is well-established, it is maintained quite easily and they don’t have to use lots of willpower to manage their behavior. Perhaps this will be clearer with some examples.

Suppose someone had the goal to be more physically active in their life. They could try to summon up their willpower on a daily basis to come up with a new plan and activity each day. Or they could come up with a plan to implement increased activity on a routine basis and use their willpower to do it consistently enough to establish the habit. I know of a woman who used this approach and committed to walk her dog four times per day. At first it seemed like a big effort and use of time. At this point she has been doing it for a year and she feels like she is missing out on something if she skips one of the four walks. It has become a regular part of her life like taking a shower or brushing her teeth…and we all know how it feels if we get sick and don’t get the chance to brush our teeth or bathe for several days.

Another example would be the difference between having a house filled with sweet treats and counting on willpower to help you avoid the constant temptation. Many people find it far easier in the long-term to “break the habit” of bringing such foods into their home. Once the new pattern of grocery shopping has been set and healthy foods predominate the house, much less willpower is needed to manage eating temptations.

Perhaps you have a goal or a life value that really speaks to you. Consider ways you can harness your own internal motivation to implement changes that may be hard at first, but once the new pattern has been set, will make your life easier, healthier, and more satisfying.
The Faces At Our Place:

Meet Dr. Uliana Skibicky

Health Psychologist Uliana Skibicky joined the UW Health Medical & Surgical Weight Management Program in July, 2013.

About Uliana:

Professionally I began as a Registered Dietitian with a special interest in the areas of non-diet weight management, eating disorders, disordered eating, and nutritional counseling. My passion for counseling compelled me to return to school and become a Licensed Professional Counselor. A particularly rewarding career experience was providing in-home psychotherapy for individuals with mental health and eating/weight management issues. I recently completed a doctoral program and now, as a Health Psychologist, I am excited to be serving bariatric patients – assisting you in achieving their goals. On the personal side, I prioritize spiritual growth, being physically active (running, hiking, yoga, skiing, and biking), and I have a wide range of interests (cooking, baking, training service dogs, arts and crafts, fancy gold fish and marine aquariums, playing board and card games, fishing, growing my favorite flowers and plants, and weekend “get-away” trips). My husband and I are empty-nesters with three adult children and a granddaughter and I am finding that with each year, family gatherings become more and more precious.

Uliana, who is that handsome fellow?!?

That is Pilot, who is training to be a seeing eye dog. Pilot was patient enough to visit and pose for a few pictures!
Join Dr. Garren to Walk with a Doc!  Monday, October 7, 6:00 p.m.
Topic: How to ask your doctor effective questions that lead to the best treatment and prevention for your health
Hoyt Park, 3902 Regent Street, Madison Wisconsin; http://www.cityofmadison.com

Dr. Michael Garren is certified by the American Board of Surgery, is a fellow in the American College of Surgeons, and a member of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery. His clinical specialties include minimally invasive bariatric surgery as well as other advanced laparoscopic procedures, including colon, anti reflux, and hernia surgery. He is the medical director of the UW Health Medical & Surgical Weight Management Program.

Important Reminder:
Please arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time to allow time for registration and check-in.

Check your bariatric insurance benefits for 2014 as changes in policies occur from time to time.
Insurance questions?
Give us a call at
(608) 265-7090

Attend Support Group!
2nd Monday of Every Month, 5:30-7:00 pm, UW Health East Clinic Lower-Level Auditorium • Free! •
October 14, 2013
November 11, 2013
December 9, 2013

Attend Our Lifestyle Class!
Educational classes on bariatric-specific topics led by members of our team including our Dietitians, Health Psychologists, and Physician Assistant.
2nd & 4th Monday of Every Month, 4:30-5:20 pm, UW Health East Clinic Lower-Level Auditorium
$5 per class; buy 5 sessions for $20 or 12 for $45
September 23, 2013
October 14, 2013
November 11, 2013
December 9, 2013
Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you’ve imagined.

- Thoreau

Photo courtesy of Brian A., (Gastric Bypass 9/2011)

Want YOUR before & after photos featured here?

E-mail photos to Mary at moscnnell2@uwhealth.org

If comfortable sharing, include:
- Dates of each photo
- Surgery date & procedure
- Any special note you’d like, such as weight lost or goals met so far

Photos will be featured in our next newsletter and in a PowerPoint slide beside each surgery type. It can be uploaded or deleted per your request at any time!
The UW Health Medical and Surgical Weight Management Program is a Center of Excellence, as designated by the American College of Surgeons Bariatric Surgery Center Network. This designation reflects the program’s achievement of the highest standards in the field of bariatric surgery and ongoing commitment to providing high-quality, patient-centered care.

We offer patients the means to lose weight safely, restore health and improve quality of life with our medical and surgical program options. We stress the most important aspect of weight loss is improved health after surgery or medical therapy. The true measure of our program’s success is the improvement or elimination of many weight-related health conditions.

For more information, please contact us at:

5249 E. Terrace Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53718

Website: www.uwhealth.org/weightloss
(608) 265-7090 | (800) 323-8942 E-mail: bariatric@surgery.wisc.edu

We want to hear from you!

What is the one thing that could make your experience with the UW Health Medical & Surgical Weight Management Program better?

Comments, Newsletter Article Suggestions, or Topics You’d Like to Read More About:

☐ Please contact me to follow-up regarding my suggestions.
☐ Please add me to the e-mail distribution list for future editions of this newsletter.

Name

Phone & E-Mail