

Your Health

Information to help you live a longer, healthier life

Resolution of Type II Diabetes Leads to Woman's New Role as Health Advocate

Time can change everything. For many, this phrase may conjure an image of things aging, weakening, and losing their vibrancy. This New Years, one woman reflects on her transformation in the opposite direction—from sickness to health; from physical weakness to becoming a source of strength to others. Her story is more than one of weight loss, but the resolution of several serious medical conditions that threatened her life.

When Judi Smith first walked through the doors of McLaren Wound Care and Bariatric Institute in Clarkston, it was with the assistance of a cane and a host of health issues. At 326 pounds, she fell into the classification of morbidly obese. Her excess weight was putting a strain on her knees, heart, kidneys, liver, and her self-esteem. Although her visit was for treating the lesions on her legs that were a side effect of her Type II diabetes, she picked up a brochure about bariatric surgery and saw it as a lifeline being thrown out to her.

“I recall the conversation between my husband and I sitting in the waiting room that day,” said Judi. “It didn’t take us very long to both decide this was what I was going to do. I was not able to live a quality life in my condition and needed to make a change.”

Once it was determined that Medicare would cover 80% of her surgery, Judi moved through the required doctor appointments, tests, and counseling in just three weeks. She was able to lose 30 pounds before surgery through the prescribed pre-operative diet. On April 19, 2010, two days after her 45th wedding anniversary, she underwent laparoscopic Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery at McLaren Regional Medical Center. In the gastric bypass procedure, the stomach is divided into a small pouch, which holds approximately two tablespoons of food. This volume restriction creates the sensation of being full after eating a few ounces of food. The small intestine is then divided and sewn to the pouch so that the food goes directly into the small intestine. Dr. Michael Kia, a board certified surgeon at McLaren Bariatric Institute, performed the surgery. Her husband, Ken, views the surgery as the greatest anniversary present he could have received.

“Dr. Kia spoke to me just after Judi’s surgery,” said Ken. “Dr. Kia discovered Judi’s liver was dangerously fatty and damaged and some of it needed to be cut away. He said that if Judi had not come in for surgery and her liver problem went undetected she may not have made it another two years. Now I know we are enjoying more time together that we might have missed otherwise.” Now, nearly two years after surgery, Judi is looking slender, healthy and radiant at 67 years old. She has lost 144 pounds and feels like she is at a good weight. Her body mass index (BMI) dropped from 58.05 before surgery to 27.1. Her Type II diabetes is resolved. She has been able to stop taking insulin injections, hypertension medication and no longer suffers from asthma. She confesses she has always been a homebody and still is. She enjoys walking for fun outside and helping her husband with some of the yard work, something she could never do before.

The experience has changed her life for the better, and she is quick to help others struggling with obesity and the co-morbid conditions that often accompany it. Judi and her husband regularly attend the bariatric support group meetings at McLaren Bariatric Institute’s Clarkston site. She drew on the strength of members of the group throughout her journey and now enjoys being a source of information and encouragement for new patients. In addition to the support group

sessions, Judi calls to check on many of the new people and has visited several of them in the hospital following their surgery. Through this involvement, Judi has developed friendships with patients and bariatric staff members who she claims feels more like a family to her now.

This is the second New Years holiday that Judi is enjoying her restored health and happiness.

“I carry the ‘before’ pictures with me in my purse in case people want to see what I used to look like,” said Judi. “Some people don’t like to look at their old ‘heavy’ pictures, but I think it’s important to keep them around. The pictures make it real for people who want to want to change themselves too.”



Judi before bariatric surgery at 328 pounds



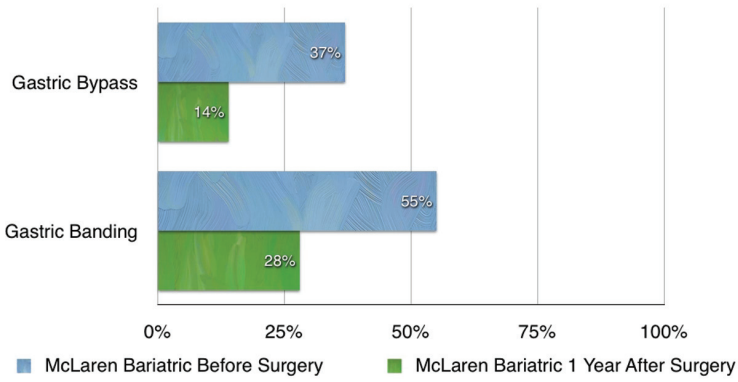
Judi nearly two years after bariatric surgery at 182 pounds

When looking at the overall patient population at McLaren the need for diabetes medication is reduced following weight loss surgery.

Health Benefits Realized through Weight Loss Surgery

Percentage of Bariatric Surgery Patients Taking Diabetes Medication

Before Surgery Compared to 1 Year After Surgery



It's not what you lose.
It's what you gain.



Struggling with a weight problem? McLaren Bariatric Institute can help you lose weight and live a happier, healthier life. In fact, if you suffer from type II diabetes, weight loss from bariatric surgery can even reverse your symptoms.

At McLaren Bariatric Institute, we take a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to reshaping your life, offering minimally invasive adjustable gastric bands, including LAP-BAND and REALIZE Band. Our board-certified surgeons and caring staff members design a plan that’s just right for you and are dedicated to supporting you throughout your entire journey, before and after surgery. With us on your side, you won’t just lose the weight. You’ll gain a more active, complete and satisfying life.

Take the easy first step by attending a free informational session on bariatric surgery.

LEARN THE LATEST

Good news! Many insurance companies are now covering LAP-BAND procedures for patients who have body mass indexes of 30-40 and certain corresponding medical conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea or high cholesterol.

Bariatric Surgery – Free Informational Sessions Every Thursday*

January 5 & 19 • 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. January 12 & 26 • 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Presented by Michael Kia, DO, bariatric surgeon Presented by Harris Dabideen, MD, bariatric surgeon

at McLaren BeechHill Centre
G-3200 Beecher Road • Flint, MI 48532

*Informational sessions also offered in Clarkston. Call for details.

Seating limited; registration required.

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