



The Surgical  
Weight Loss Center  
At Parkway



Center of  
Excellence

BARIATRIC SURGERY

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PARKWAY  
MEDICAL CENTER

# AN OVERVIEW

*The Surgical Weight Loss Center at Parkway Medical Center is a comprehensive program for the education, treatment, and care of patients with morbid obesity who have had or will undergo weight loss (bariatric) surgery. Treatment of morbid obesity includes not only the surgery and post-operative care, but also extensive medical evaluation, dietary counseling, patient and family education, healthy lifestyle support and yearly follow-up. We believe in the team approach to weight loss surgery.*

## ■ The Surgical Weight Loss Center Team

- Bariatric Surgeon - W. Jay Suggs, MD, FACS, FASMBS
- Physicians
- Program Coordinator and Dietitian
- Anesthesiologist and anesthetists
- Specialty nurses
- Financial counselors

## ■ About Obesity

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly two thirds of all U.S. adults are overweight and one third of all U.S. adults are obese. Each year 300,000 deaths are attributed to poor diet and inactivity.

## ■ Potential Benefits of Weight Loss Surgery

- Greater than 50% excess weight loss
- The weight stays off, if the patient is committed to life-style change
- Type II diabetes is improved or cured in most patients
- Hypertension improved or resolved
- Normalized or decreased cholesterol and lipids
- Decreased risk of heart attack, stroke and premature death
- Improvement of sleep apnea
- Improvement in gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)
- Improvement in joint pain and venous stasis disease

## ■ Alternatives to Weight Loss Surgery

Healthy diet and exercise is one of the traditional methods to lose weight. Other alternatives include: weight reduction programs that charge fees to administer the program, medical treatment by a physician and behavioral modification treatments. Weight loss surgery should only be considered after attempts at traditional weight loss methods have failed.

## ■ Qualifications for The Surgical Weight Loss Center

- Age 18-69, male or female
  - Willingness to comply with follow-up and diet changes
  - Nonsmoker for at least 2 months
  - Certain medical conditions and surgeries may make weight loss surgery too risky
  - Body Mass Index\* (BMI) of 40 to 70 with documented failed medical weight loss efforts (BMI of 35-39 with qualifying medical co-morbidities)
- \* *Body Mass Index is a number derived by using height and weight measurements that gives a general indication if weight falls in a healthy range.*

## ■ Risks of Weight Loss Surgery

Risks of weight loss surgery will vary for each candidate. Therefore, each person should discuss any possible risks with a physician who is familiar with his/her medical history.

Risks for weight loss surgery may include:

- Early Complications: leak, bleeding, infection, anastomotic stricture, blood clots, pulmonary embolism, pneumonia
- Late Complications: ulcer, hernia, bowel obstruction, anemia, B12 and calcium deficiency, dumping syndrome
- Laparoscopic Adjustable Gastric Band Complications: slippage, erosions, port flip or breakage
- Death

*Special note: many patients have temporary hair loss; some patients complain of excess gas or occasional GI upset in the first few months*

## ■ OPERATIONS

### Laparoscopic Roux-En-Y gastric bypass

The Roux-en-Y gastric bypass is the most common operation in weight loss surgery, and has been performed successfully laparoscopically (a minimally invasive surgical technique) in hundreds of thousands of patients. Patients with a BMI of 35-60 qualify, as stated above.

Six tiny incisions, from the size of a pencil eraser to about 1-1/2 inches long, are placed in the abdominal wall, the operation is performed with the aid of a camera and special laparoscopic instruments. A small pouch is stapled off from the top part of the stomach and a limb of intestine, the Roux limb, is rerouted up to the pouch.

Most patients who receive the laparoscopic gastric bypass surgery recover from the operation very quickly. One may return to full activities in less than a month.

# THE OPERATION

The gastric bypass surgery works in three ways. First, the pouch restricts the volume one can eat in a meal to about 1oz. Second, the Roux limb is somewhat malabsorptive. Third, the operation “tricks” the body into wanting to lose weight; normally, the body goes into starvation mode when on a diet.

Active weight loss continues from 6 months to over 18 months. After approximately one year most patients have reached their lowest weight.

## ■ Laparoscopic Adjustable Gastric Banding

Laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding is a newer weight loss operation which restricts your food intake and controls your hunger, but does not require stapling or bypass. Weight loss is slower, over about 3 years, but the risks are smaller. An adjustable “band” is placed around the upper stomach. Adjustments are performed by injecting fluid into the “port” periodically, thus managing your weight loss.

## ■ Laparoscopic Sleeve Gastrectomy

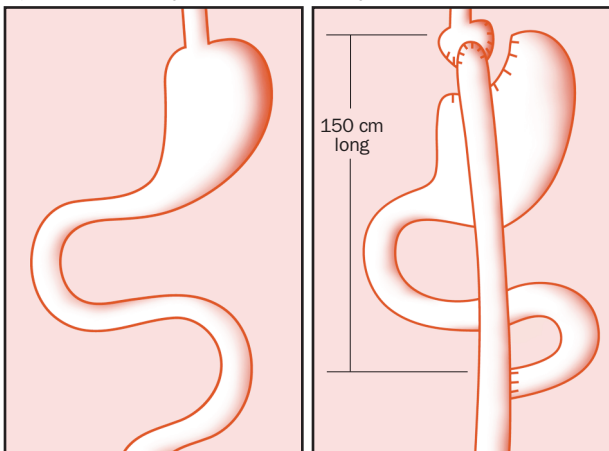
This exciting new procedure offers the benefits and safety profile of the band without requiring adjustments. Now being offered at the Surgical Weight Loss Center.

## ■ Post-Operative Care

Most laparoscopic gastric bypass patients are discharged from the hospital 1-2 days after surgery; Band patients are usually discharged within 24 hours. A Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) pump is used for pain control while in the hospital. Perioperative antibiotics, heparin injections to prevent blood clots and walking as soon as possible after surgery are essential.

## ■ Follow-Up

Patients are scheduled for a post operative visit with the doctor a few days after surgery, one month after surgery, 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months after surgery, then annually for life. Patients with the Band need frequent “adjustments” the first year after surgery, then life-long adjustments every few months to a year.



## ■ Your New Diet

Your diet progresses through phases, starting with clear liquids. Your diet then progresses to full liquids and pureed food over a 4 to 5 week period. Normal foods are then slowly introduced, but in much smaller quantities than before the surgery. Dietary counseling continues indefinitely.

## ■ Exercise

Exercise is critical not only to maximize weight loss but also to improve your cardiovascular health. We recommend that you begin an aerobic exercise routine, such as brisk walking or swimming, even before surgery.

## ■ Plastic Surgery

You lose fat but not skin. After weight loss is complete, many patients elect to have the excess skin hanging below the waist removed with an operation called a panniculectomy.

Other plastic surgery options include: removal of excess skin on the arms, neck, thighs, as well as breast and buttock lifts.

## ■ Support Groups

Studies have shown that positive results from weight loss surgery correlate with support group involvement. One pre-operative attendance at a weight loss surgery support group is recommended. Monthly support group attendance post-operatively is encouraged.

The New Beginnings support group meets the 2nd and 4th Monday of every month at Parkway Medical Center at 6:30 p.m. Call (256) 301-3310 for more information.

## ■ Pregnancy

Female patients are advised to wait 12 to 18 months after a gastric bypass before becoming pregnant.

## INSURANCE PRE-CERTIFICATION

Authorization for weight loss surgery must be obtained from your insurance company prior to scheduling surgery. Each insurance company has different requirements. Physician documentation of morbid obesity to include height and weight over a three year period of time is one example. Documented physician supervised weight loss efforts for six months prior to surgery is another. The members of the Surgical Weight Loss Center team are here to assist you through the course of obtaining insurance precertification.

## STEPS TO WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY

### ■ Step 1

Contact your insurance company for specific policy information on weight loss surgery. All insurance pre-certifications must be completed before weight loss surgery is scheduled. If you have questions, concerns or need assistance, call Dr. Jay Suggs at (256) 355-6414.

### ■ Step 2

Call (256) 301-3310 for an appointment. Separate appointments for initial evaluations will be scheduled with the Program Coordinator, Registered Dietitian and Dr. Jay Suggs.

### ■ Step 3

Attendance at a community lecture at The Surgical Weight Loss Center and a support group meeting prior to your appointments is strongly advised. Please call for a seminar schedule.

### ■ Step 4

A complete medical examination including: lab work, EKG, ultrasound of the gallbladder and chest x-ray may be required after your initial appointment with Dr. Suggs.

### ■ Step 5

Medical clearance by a family physician or internist is required for surgery. Psychological clearance may be required.

### ■ Step 6

Preoperative appointments with Dr. Suggs, the Program Coordinator and Registered Dietitian will be scheduled, along with a pre-anesthesia exam. A tour of the hospital facilities can be scheduled upon request.

### ■ Step 7

Weight Loss Surgery





## ABOUT DR. SUGGS

W. Jay Suggs, MD, FACS, FASMBS is a board certified surgeon with special fellowship training in laparoscopic and bariatric surgery. He is a native of north Alabama, married with three children. He has performed over 700 bariatric operations and is a U.A.B. Clinical

Assistant Professor of Surgery. He is the staff surgeon of the Surgical Weight Loss Center at Parkway Medical Center.

### ■ Training

- University Medical Center Princeton, NJ, Laparoscopic/Bariatric Surgery Fellowship
- Mayo Clinic General Surgery Residency
- University of Alabama School of Medicine
  - Alpha Omega Alpha
- Emory University
  - Phi Beta Kappa
- Certified by the American Board of Surgery
- Multiple publications, abstracts, and presentations at national meetings

### ■ Memberships

- American Society for Bariatric Surgery
- Board Certification with the American Board of Surgery
- International Federation for Surgery of Obesity and Society of American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons
- University of Alabama School of Medicine Alumni Association
- Mayo Alumni Association

Parkway Medical Center is a 120 bed advanced full service hospital. Fully accredited by the Joint Commission, the facility is designated as a Center of Excellence for Bariatric Surgery. This designation assures that the Surgical Weight Loss Center and Parkway Medical Center promote patient safety and advocacy, identifies our comprehensive commitment to a high level of bariatric care and designates our center as a top performing program. The Surgical Weight Loss Center has among the lowest complication rates in the country, with long-term weight loss meeting or exceeding national standards.



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BARIATRIC SURGERY

**The Surgical Weight Loss Center  
at Parkway Medical Center**

1874 Beltline Road SW  
Decatur, Alabama 35601  
(256) 301-3310

Call for more information  
or to request an appointment.

**Bariatric Coordinator**  
(256) 301-3310

**Dietician for the Surgical Weight Loss Center**  
(256) 301-3719

**Support Group Information Phone**  
(256) 301-3310

**Dr. Suggs**  
(256) 355-6414 or fax (256) 355-6646

**Website**  
[www.parkwayinspired.com](http://www.parkwayinspired.com) & [www.parkwaymedicalcenter.com](http://www.parkwaymedicalcenter.com)