

## What Surgical Procedures are Available?

Two surgical options are offered at our hospital:

- In a **sleeve gastrectomy**, the stomach is cut to reduce it in size by approximately 80 to 85 percent. Patients feel full on a small amount of food, and weight loss occurs through restriction of food intake.
- With a **roux-en-Y gastric bypass**, the stomach is divided to make a smaller pouch and attached to a downstream portion of the intestine. The larger stomach and first part of the intestine are "bypassed." Surgery changes how food is absorbed, and decreases the amount of food that can be ingested. Weight loss occurs through restriction of food intake and malabsorption of calories and nutrients.

*"Having struggled with weight for decades, it feels great to have that burden lifted. It takes hard work and a personal commitment to a new way of thinking about food. My life is so different from how it was before surgery, and I'm thankful to the MedStar St. Mary's bariatric team for their support."*

*- Paul Horner,  
Lexington Park, Maryland*



# It's Not *Just* About the Weight

It's About Taking  
Control of Your **Life**

**A Pocket Guide to  
Bariatric Surgery**



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## What is Bariatric Surgery?

Bariatric surgery is a clinical procedure performed on the stomach and/or intestines to induce weight loss. For patients with health issues like diabetes, high blood pressure, and sleep apnea, undergoing a bariatric procedure and committing to a new lifestyle could put an end to weight-related health conditions that limit daily activities and ultimately threaten to shorten lives.

As with any lifestyle change, **results depend on a permanent personal commitment to a new way of living and managing food.** But you're not alone on the journey—MedStar St. Mary's Hospital is ready to help you every step of the way.



*"Surgery is there to help you, not limit you. Before surgery, I remember having uncontrollable cravings, or not eating fruit, or just not eating at all. For me, gastric bypass has given me back my sense of control."*

*- Angela Washel,  
Powhatan, Virginia*

## How Do I Know if I Am Eligible?

Researching a surgical solution for weight loss is not a decision you make lightly. We take this seriously, too, and want to ensure you are an ideal candidate.

To be eligible for bariatric surgery, patients must meet the following criteria:

- Have a body mass index (BMI) of:
  - 35 or more, with at least one weight-related medical conditions
  - 40 or more, with no weight-related medical condition
- Be committed to a major lifestyle change
- Show evidence of weight loss in our preoperative weight management program
- Be healthy enough to undergo a major operation
- Be free of unstable psychiatric issues
- Be free of tobacco, alcohol, or substance abuse

## How Do I Find Support?

To help you make the lifestyle changes needed to ensure long-term weight loss, MedStar St. Mary's offers **weight management education, nutrition counseling, and a monthly support group** led by a health professional experienced in bariatric surgery. We also have referrals available for local psychiatric evaluations and cardiopulmonary testing, as appropriate.

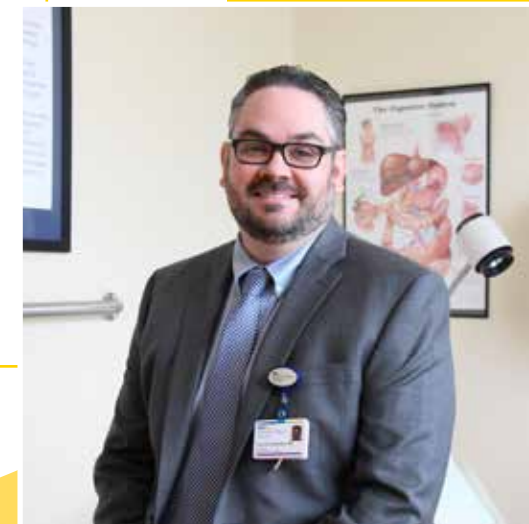
## Does Health Insurance Cover Surgery?

Most insurances do cover bariatric surgery. It is highly recommended that you contact your insurance company first to verify your individual coverage.



## Meet Our Expert

At MedStar St. Mary's, our bariatric team is led by Nicholas Tapazoglou, MD, who is board-certified in general surgery and fellowship-trained in bariatric surgery. Dr. Tapazoglou is available to discuss your personal health goals and discuss whether surgery could be right for you.



## What's the First Step?

Choose what works for you: attend an in-person **bariatric information session** held at the Outpatient Pavilion, or complete an **online seminar** right from home. Monthly in-person sessions are led by our expert surgeon, who provides guidance on pre- and post-operative care as well as answers to your questions about the bariatric journey.

Visit [MedStarStMarys.org/WeightLoss](https://www.MedStarStMarys.org/WeightLoss) to reserve your seat, or call **240-434-4088**.