

All in the Family

Bayshore Medical Center *Three siblings underwent weight loss surgery together, making them closer than ever.*

One of the most important factors for someone having weight loss surgery is a good support system. Fortunately for siblings Linda Zani, Sheryl Miranda and Duane Morrill, they have that in spades.

It was January 2015 when the sisters both had a bariatric surgery known as sleeve gastrectomy. This involves making the stomach smaller and reducing the hunger hormones it produces.

Making the Decision

Before the sisters had bariatric surgery, “Linda had gotten really, really sick, and I couldn’t look at her in the hospital bed and think we weren’t going to be able to grow old together,” says Sheryl. “I thought, ‘I’m making the appointment for a consultation and we’re going.’”

Linda, 54, of Middletown, and Sheryl, 52, of Port Monmouth, had their surgeries performed at the Center for Bariatrics at Bayshore Medical Center by **Richard Greco, D.O.**, and two months later, their brother Duane followed.

“It was sibling rivalry,” Sheryl laughs. “Our younger brother would never let us weigh less than he does!”

Duane, 49, of Tinton Falls, knew his sisters had a positive experience with Dr. Greco, but he still wanted to do his own research before deciding on a surgeon. He attended one of the informational seminars held at Bayshore’s Center for Bariatrics and was impressed with the answers to his questions. “My first impression of Dr. Greco was that he had such a positive attitude,” he says.

Linda adds, “He was very knowledgeable and very compassionate. We had so much fun with him at the seminar and going into our first visit — we ended up having so much confidence in him.”

A New Dynamic

In addition to meeting with in-house dietitians, attending support groups on topics like ordering at restaurants, and consulting the big book of resources the center provides, the siblings leaned on one another.

They set up a group text and talked almost daily about any issues that came up.

“The biggest thing that people may not realize is, it’s more than just changing your appearance and limiting what you can eat,” Dr. Greco says.

“It’s a complete lifestyle change. You’re given the tools to succeed, but you still have to change the lifestyle and avoid the food triggers that cause less successful weight loss. A big support system helps keep people from slipping into their old habits.”

The three even traveled together for the first time



Richard Greco, D.O.
Board certified in
General Surgery
Holmdel
1-800-560-9990

in years, visiting their brother in Texas. They all say it has brought them closer together, plus improved their relationships with others.

“It’s changed the dynamic of the relationship with my kids,” Duane says. “When you come home and you’re this big, fat guy, and you’re depressed all the time, you project that out to your family.”

Even if you don’t have the same built-in network of family members going through the experience with you, the Center for Bariatrics provides plenty of support. The siblings appreciated how up-front the staff was before the procedure and how willing they were to



continue following up afterward. “I liked that it wasn’t like you went in for surgery and they were done with you,” Duane says. “Anything you needed, any issue you ran into, they were there.”

There were some struggles along the way with changing their lifestyles. When Sheryl wasn’t losing weight at first, she had to examine her habits with help from the Center for Bariatrics. It was this support that helped her see the choices she was making that might be sabotaging her goals, and how she could stick with a balanced diet.

A Family Legacy

Since having surgery, Duane is down 80 pounds, Sheryl has shed 100 pounds and Linda has lost 176 pounds. “The first time you sit on an airplane and you fit in the seat, you cry,” says Linda. “The first time you sit in a movie theater and your legs don’t fall asleep, you cry.”

Each is glad to have gotten the surgery. Their parents both died young, and in their family, living past 60 was considered borrowed time. Starting with their generation, that will no longer be

the accepted narrative in their family. “We get to have this gift of more years, which is priceless,” Sheryl says. “We’ll be there for our children and our children’s children — and each other.” ■

**L to R: Siblings
Linda Zani, Sheryl
Miranda and Duane
Morrill are pictured
at the waterfront in
Middletown near
the Ghost House.**

Help and Hope for Your Weight Loss Journey



For many severely overweight people, surgery is the best and safest option for long-lasting weight loss. If you’ve tried to shed pounds without success, don’t give up. Visit HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Bariatrics to learn more about the expert care offered at our Center for Bariatrics.

