

A Changed Man

Bayshore Community Hospital *Sleeve gastrectomy weight loss surgery gives Keansburg man a new lease on life.*

Just a few years ago, Patrick Greene lived a very different life than he does today. He would wake up in the morning, have breakfast in bed, and then go back to sleep and not get up until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. His activity level was a self-described "zero," and just walking a block was painful.

Although his wife, Beth, urged him to have bariatric surgery — also known as weight loss surgery — he wasn't ready. After about a year of thinking about it, he decided it was finally time to visit the Center for Bariatrics at Bayshore Community Hospital. "I had to be wheeled in a wheelchair to the clinic," he remembers. "I couldn't even walk."

Choosing the Sleeve

There, Patrick met with **Jonathan Reich, M.D.**, a surgeon affiliated with Bayshore who specializes in bariatric surgery. For patients who are morbidly obese and have failed to lose weight through nonsurgical methods such as diet, exercise and medications, there are three options: gastric bypass, gastric band or sleeve gastrectomy. Patrick chose to have the sleeve gastrectomy, which works by reducing the stomach's volume and appetite hormone.

"The sleeve gastrectomy was first done 29 years ago, but it never caught on because equipment wasn't good enough to do the procedures minimally invasively and with low risk for complications," Dr. Reich says. "Now the sleeve is taking over everything with weight loss surgery."

How It Works

Calling it a sleeve is a little misleading, says Dr. Reich. The procedure involves stapling the stomach to reshape it. A typical stomach can hold 1 to 2 liters of food and fluid. When the stomach realizes it's empty, it releases a hormone signaling hunger. People who have fast-emptying stomachs tend to struggle with weight, because their body tells them they're hungry even when they've recently eaten.

"A hundred years ago, food and electricity were scarce and it wasn't as easy to store things," explains Dr. Reich. "We're not designed to have food on demand; we're designed to still be hunting and gathering. That's where this appetite hormone really comes into play."

During the sleeve procedure, the stomach is reduced to about 35 percent of its original size. It still works the same way it did before, except that a person will get full faster and produce less of the hormone that tells his or her body to find more food.

A New Beginning

Since having weight loss surgery in August 2014, Patrick has lost about 260 pounds and wears a size 36 in pants. He had no difficulties adjusting to his new life and diet, although he did have to attend physical therapy to work on his muscle tone.

"Patrick has done phenomenally well," Dr. Reich says. "He's lost a tremendous amount of weight and completely changed everything he does in terms of function. We're as happy as can be that he's now healthy and able to move."

His wife, too, has been pleased with what her husband of eight years is capable of now that he's had the surgery. "Before, it was like I didn't even have a husband; he didn't do anything with me at all," Beth says. "Now, he helps me around the house and goes everywhere with me. Our relationship is so much better."

Even though it took Patrick a while to decide he wanted the surgery, he urges anyone else in the same position to consider it. "I'm happy with the success that it is," Patrick says. "Take the chance and go for it. You'll see your life will begin again."



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Are You a Candidate?



Wondering if weight loss surgery might be for you? Visit **MeridianWeightless.com** to calculate your body mass index (BMI) and learn more. You can also find the schedule for upcoming seminars in your area, where you can get more information and ask questions.



Patrick Greene, pictured with his dog, Sasha, owns several dogs and birds.