New Beginnings

Bariatric surgery and high blood pressure. Published October 2009 by the AMSBS.

Obesity is always discussed in context with the Metabolic Syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is defined by the combination of hypertension (high blood pressure), impaired glucose tolerance (diabetes), and dyslipidemia (high cholesterol). It is this triad that accounts for the majority of death and morbidities that obese patients suffer. Progression of the metabolic syndrome ultimately lead to stroke, heart attack, and dialysis.

Despite the clear relationship between obesity and hypertension, the underlying basis is still unclear. Many believe that insulin is the culprit while others feel that there are other hormonal factors that lead to high blood pressure.

There is a clear correlation between insulin levels and the metabolic syndrome, especially with diabetes. It is felt that the insulin also causes kidneys to retain sodium and that those higher levels of sodium in the blood cause the body to also retain water. By retaining water and salt in the blood, the body suffers from an increase in pressure in the arteries. A second effect is that with elevated levels of insulin cause the brain to become overexcited and as a result, the brain increases the muscular tone in the arteries. In either case, it is clear that elevated insulin levels contribute to hypertension.

The kidney produces its own hormones and these hormones are clearly elevated in obese patients. These hormones affect the salt levels in the blood and increase the kidney’s blood pressure.

Exercise Tip

You don’t NEED to go to a gym to exercise. In our busy days, sometimes there isn’t time… but that isn’t an excuse. Exercise is everywhere: remember 10,000 steps a day is much better than two days in the gym and the rest of your time on your bottom.

Everyday Tip

10%. That is the magic number for exercise. Weekly, increase the amount, the pace, or the strenuousness of your workout by no more than ten percent in order to prevent injuries. Also, vary your workout to include both cardiovascular and weights.

Dietary Tip

Avoid HEAD HUNGER by keeping busy. Often in times of stress and boredom, we revert to some of our old stress relieving habits unwittingly and find ourselves standing in front of the fridge when we aren’t actually hungry. This is the perfect time to go for a walk, read a good book, or play a game with the family. Remember that keeping mentally occupied is the best way to avoid these traps.

Good fill, Bad fill for LapBand patients

Not all fills are good and being over filled can severely restrict the stomach and can damage the esophagus irreparably. A fill that is good in the office can become too tight in hours or days and really takes about 1-2 weeks to finally settle in. That is why we wait at least 4 weeks between fills, data supported by Allergan, the company who produces the band.

A good fill allows you to easily drink fluids and after 24 hours enables about 1-1.5 cups of food per meal. With proper techniques and choices there should be no sliming, vomiting, nor pain. With a proper fill, meal satiety should last 3-4 hours and weight loss should be about 0.5-1lb per week with continued commitment to the program.

To help get a good fill, make sure you stay hydrated, don’t eat immediately prior to your appointment and avoid timing a fill with your period. Lastly, make sure you can tolerate liquids after you get a fill. If you can’t tolerate liquids in the first 24 hours, it WILL NOT get better and it is best to get an small unfill than wait and have to get all of the fluid removed.
Another theory is that the body is affected by the weight creating an elevation in the pressure of the abdomen itself and that elevation creates negative effects on the kidneys by compressing the arteries and veins. This would make it much harder to get blood back to the kidneys and would in essence trick the kidneys into thinking that there wasn’t enough blood. The kidneys would then respond by saving salt and water thus increasing the blood pressure.

Leptin is another hormone that is elevated in obesity. Leptin is a hormone linked to hunger and is produced by special fat cells in the body. Like insulin, elevated levels of leptin affect the brain and increase nerve activity to blood vessels and kidney thus increasing blood pressure.

Obesity surgery is the most effective way to treat obesity and the beneficial effects on metabolic syndrome are clearly seen. This is felt to be due to the decrease in organ fat which then decrease insulin and leptin levels. Decreased intra-abdominal fat also decreases the pressure in the abdominal cavity itself which helps directly affect blood pressure. Ahmed demonstrated that blood pressure dropped 9 points 1 week following bariatric procedures and improved more over one year. Kidneys began to utilize salt correctly following surgery and postoperative use of blood pressure medications dropped by 1/3.

**Self-Control is Catching!**

If you’re having trouble sticking to your diet or your new exercise regimen, you’re not alone– and that may be part of the problem, a new study suggests. Self-control– and the lack of it– can spread through social networks, a University of Georgia psychologist study found. Volunteers who watched someone exercise self-control (by choosing a carrot instead of a cookie from a plate) scored higher on a later test of self-restraint. So did volunteers who merely thought about a friend with good self-control.

“Picking social influences that are positive can improve your self-control,” researcher Michelle van-Dellen tells LifeScience.com. “And by exhibiting self-control, you’re helping others around you do the same.” *The Week*, February 5, 2010.

**Kathy’s Kitchen**

**Egg-white omelet with Goat Cheese**

1/2 cup egg whites  
1 tsp olive oil  
1 tsp crumbled goat cheese  
3 tbsp salsa

Medium bowl whisk egg whites with 1 tbsp water and season with ground pepper. Heat olive oil on medium-high heat and add the egg whites to the skillet. Heat for about 1-2 minutes until firm then sprinkle goat cheese and salsa over the top. Gently slide off the plate and fold upon itself.

One serving: Calories: 156, Fat: 7.6g. Carbohydrates: 4g, Protein: 17.2g.

**Chicken with olives and Sun-Dried Tomatoes**

8 Dry packed sun-dried tomato halves (1/4 cup)  
Zest of 1/2 lemon cut into very thin strips (2 tbsp)  
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved lengthwise  
1 tsp and 1 tbsp olive oil  
Coarse salt and pepper  
4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves

In saucepan, bring 3 cups of water to a boil and add tomatoes and lemon zest. Reduce to simmer and cook for about 5-8 minutes or until tomatoes have softened. Drain and pat dry with paper towel. Slice tomatoes into 1/4 inch strips. Toss tomato mixture with olives, 1 tsp oil, 1/4 tsp salt and a pinch of pepper. Rub chicken with remaining oil, season with salt and pepper then place in a 9x13 inch baking dish. Sprinkle with tomato mixture. Cover tightly with foil, refrigerate until ready to cook up to overnight. Bake in preheated oven at 450 for 20 minutes. Stand for 5 minutes then serve.

Makes 4 servings.

One serving: Calories: 328, Protein: 46.7g, Fat: 12.7g, Carbohydrates: 4.4g, Fiber: 0.9g.

**Where do we get some recipes?**

Many good recipes come from a nice little magazine called Everyday Food. We like this magazine because it provides all of the nutritional data with the recipe and has easy codes that earmark low carbohydrate meals. Not all recipes in this magazine are designed for bariatric patients but many of them fit your diet.

Remember, since you can’t eat much, why not eat really good tasting food?
Another theory is that the body is affected by the weight creating an elevation in the pressure of Leptin. Leptin is another hormone that is elevated in obesity. This syndrome are clearly seen. This is felt to be due to the decrease in organ fat which then decrease insulin resistance. This in turn decreases the pressure in the abdominal cavity itself which helps directly affect blood pressure. Ahmed demonstrated that blood pressure dropped and that these effects can spread through social networks, a University of Georgia psychologist study found. Volunteers who watched someone lose weight showed weight loss on brain scans.

Unrestricted insurance access: no more excuses

People frequently ask me why South Carolina, Etna, etc., refuse to cover bariatric services. The real issue? Cost. How do it without fuming in anger over the CEO’s tens of million dollar salaries or the corporation’s billion dollar profits is beyond my ability. All studies agree that Bariatric surgery pays for itself. In diabetes alone, the savings are astronomical. In the US, there are currently 24 million diabetics and 57 million pre-diabetics. This is up three million over two years. The cost per year of diabetes is between $11,744 to $33,495 based on ADA data and this fails to account for the medical complications indirectly related to diabetes, so this is a gross underestimate. The bottom line? Baritrics is safe, it works, and is fiscally sound. We should demand better and need to remind our elected officials of our continued needs.

Dried Tomatoes

In saucepan, bring 3 cups of water to a boil and add tomatoes. Simmer slowly for 8 minutes or until tomatoes have softened. Drain and then blend in a blender. Cool and refrigerate until ready to cook up.

Walks of Beaufort

The Sands in Port Royal
Port Royal, SC
Approximate steps: 1,000
Long Walk: 5,000

The Sands is a hidden treasure. With a wooden walkway and observation deck, you can watch porpoise at the mouth of Archer’s Creek. Breezes keep the gnats away and fisherman line the boardwalk. The boardwalk and back is a short walk but a full loop from the firehouse down Paris Avenue can really add distance. This is a dog friendly walk; treats can be found in the coffee shop and the restaurant behind offers a lunch item for your dog. The Tai restaurant has an excellent selection of bariatric friendly soups freshly made by the owners.

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