

# Weight Loss

The Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Newton-Wellesley Hospital has been a leader in the field of bariatric surgery for more than a decade. The Center is fully accredited by the American College of Surgeons and offers patients access to various specialists and departments throughout the Hospital. Medical professionals at the Center are committed to providing life-long support to patients who undergo weight loss surgery. Patients from throughout New England have access to a comprehensive plan for treating obesity including:

- Bariatric surgery including; gastric bypass surgery, sleeve gastrectomy and the modified duodenal switch procedure
- Laparoscopic Removal of Adjustable Gastric Band
- Laparoscopic Conversion of Adjustable Gastric Band to Sleeve Gastrectomy or to Gastric Bypass
- Nutrition education and counseling
- Psychological counseling and referrals
- Peer support groups
- Long-term medical follow up and advanced, state-of-the-art services

## What surgical weight loss options are offered at NWH?

We do primary and revisional surgery for laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy and gastric bypass operations, laparoscopic gastric band removal and conversions and we also perform laparoscopic modified duodenal switch procedure when indicated.

## Can laparoscopic gastric bands (lap bands) be removed?

Certainly. We do not put in any bands but are often asked to see patients in the Emergency Department at NWH or the GI Unit with band complications. Most commonly we see people who come to the Center for Weight Loss Surgery as new patients with gastric bands in place. These are patients who are seeking more definitive metabolic procedures. After appropriate evaluation and preparation, we remove the band laparoscopically and convert to a sleeve or a Roux-en Y gastric bypass.

## What complications have you seen from gastric bands?

The band is made of plastic with an inflatable cuff placed around the stomach. Plastic tubing connects the band to a port, which is a plastic disc reservoir (like a mediport) buried in the abdominal wall. All parts of this apparatus can malfunction and cause problems in many ways. The band can slip and cause obstruction of the stomach, it can pinch the stomach muscle and cause serious injury to the tissue and it can also erode into the stomach and cause nausea, vomiting, bleeding and pain. Rarely a band can erode all the way into the stomach and be able to be removed through the mouth. The tubing can get trapped around the intestine and cause a small bowel obstruction. Often when the band erodes the first sign may be a port site infection at the skin. The port can also flip and be unable to be accessed with the special needle required to drain the fluid from the band.

## Are there other weight loss surgery options after band removal?

The typical patient seeking band removal has had long-term problems with the device and/or inadequate weight loss from this restrictive procedure and desires to have a lap gastric bypass or sleeve gastrectomy as a one stage operation combined with removal of the band. Occasionally the band needs to be removed as a separate operation due to scar tissue and likelihood of poor tissue healing at the time of band removal. The more definitive surgery of laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy or gastric bypass is then safely performed several weeks later when the injury from the band has healed.

## When is gastric band removal appropriate?

If a patient is having complications related to the band (poor nutrition, pain, malfunction of the device or injury to the stomach, intestine, esophagus) or has not been able to achieve and maintain a significant weight loss with the device in place, he/she may be a good candidate for a metabolic and restrictive procedure like a lap sleeve gastrectomy or a lap Roux-en Y gastric bypass.

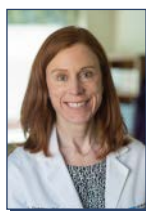
## Why should patients choose the Center for Weight Loss Surgery?

The Center for Weight Loss Surgery has a high functioning team that can help you achieve your health goals. We work together and support patients throughout their entire weight loss journey. We understand that the work of achieving and maintaining health is never complete and lifelong support and guidance is needed for patients to succeed.

## Tell us more about the Center for Weight Loss Surgery team?

As Medical Director and a surgeon in the Center for Weight Loss Surgery, I am proud to work with an outstanding team of caring and dedicated professionals. The group includes surgeons, nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, medical assistants and administrative staff. Each member of this group has background and training in bariatrics and is committed to the common goal of helping patients improve their health. Many of us have been with the Center for more than 10 years and each person brings a unique perspective and expertise to the team. Patients often tell us that coming to our Center is like joining a family. In addition to the caregivers and support staff, fellow patients and community meeting are vital to the ongoing support for patients in our weight loss surgery program.

**For more information about the Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Newton-Wellesley Hospital please visit [www.nwh.org/weightloss](http://www.nwh.org/weightloss) or call CareFinder at 866-NWH-DOCS (694-3627).**



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Dr. Partridge graduated from Cornell University Medical College. She completed her residency in general surgery at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and was a Harvard Medical School clinical fellow in surgery. She is board certified in general surgery. Dr. Partridge has expertise in minimally invasive bariatric and gastrointestinal surgery.