



YOU and your WEIGHT

**Understanding How You
Can Take Back Control**



Learn How to Take Back Control

We all strive to live a healthy lifestyle. Good health offers immense benefits, both physical and mental. Although good health has many components, a person's weight is an extremely important element of overall well-being. In fact, the benefits of weight loss are much greater than just shedding pounds. Losing weight helps to treat a variety of conditions, including diabetes, hypertension, and sleep apnea.

However, for many, losing weight and keeping it off can be easier said than done. The good news is that it's not too late to take control of your health by rethinking your weight loss strategy.

Each year, hundreds of people turn to Cooper's Center for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery. Here, patients are welcomed by our expert team of fellowship-trained surgeons—Dr. Rohit Patel, Dr. Brendan O'Connell, and Dr. Harish Kakkilaya—who provide patients with a unique comprehensive care program that is designed to help patients to achieve their weight loss goals.

Lynette L.
Cooper Bariatric
Surgery Patient



Delivering so many patient success stories has led to rapid growth of our program. We've expanded our services to three additional locations in Sicklerville, Egg Harbor Township, and Woodstown. These conveniently located South Jersey facilities offer all bariatric services, including new patient consultations, dietitian visits, follow-up care, and postoperative visits with surgeons and advanced practice providers.

This guide will help you to understand your weight and the associated health risks, help you to set goals, and review some of the services offered by the region's leading bariatric team at Cooper University Health Care.

Reading this guide may prove to be your first step in a new chapter of your life.

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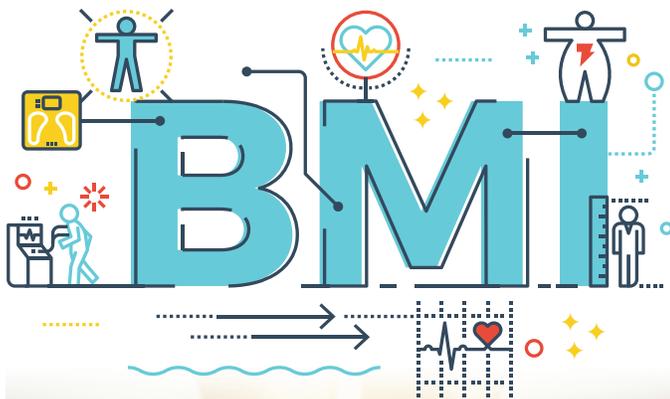
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Understanding Your Weight

When it comes to your weight and its effect on your overall health, it's important to understand that everyone's body is different. Some people are overweight, some are underweight, and some are considered "normal." Identifying your personal "normal" is as easy as calculating your body mass index, or BMI.

BMI is a measure used by healthcare professionals to estimate a person's excess body fat. Visit our online calculator to determine your BMI: <https://www.cooperhealth.org/BMI>



Setting a New Course for Healthy Living

Now that you have a better understanding of your personal weight and where you fall on the BMI scale, the next step is to decide whether it's time to set a new course in your health strategy. Keep in mind that the BMI scale is intended only to be used as a guide because it does not consider factors such as gender, age, and muscle tone. For a truly accurate BMI score, it's best to schedule an appointment with your doctor.

Having the desire to make a change is the first step. Many people who are even slightly overweight express sentiments such as "I feel fine, and I'm active, so my weight is fine." However, if your BMI is considered overweight, you are putting yourself at risk for a variety of long-term health problems.

Countless research studies link being overweight to a wide variety of concerns that include but are not limited to heart disease and stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, gout, and even cancer.

Therefore, if your goal is to lead a long, healthy life and to be there for important events, such as graduations and weddings, and maybe to welcome grandchildren (and even great-grandchildren), now is the time to act.



Brittany W.
Cooper Bariatric
Surgery patient
Lost 147 pounds

Scheduling a Consultation

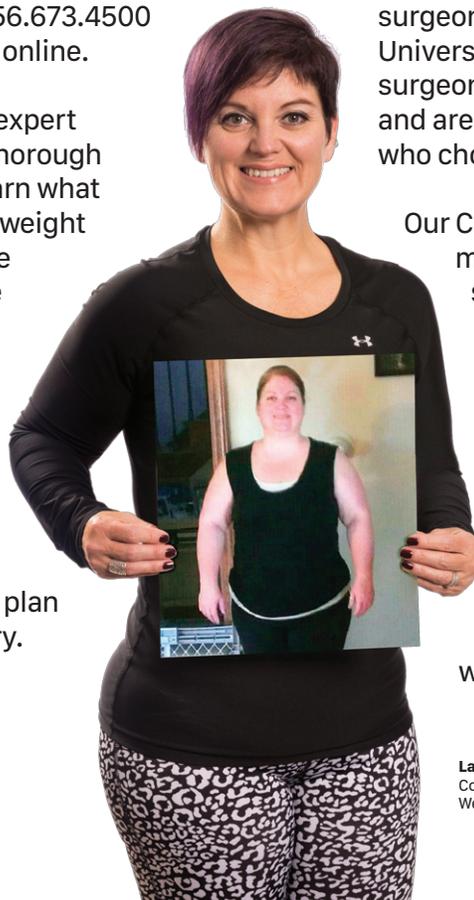
Making lifestyle changes that include diet and exercise are typically at the core of any weight loss strategy. However, for some, diet and exercise may not be enough to reach a healthy BMI.

Many people try for years to lose weight, only to gain it back. Weight loss can be frustrating and defeating, and for many, it can be an endless cycle of literal losses and gains. To determine your best weight loss strategy, the first step is to arrange a consultation with a bariatric provider.

At Cooper University Health Care, our bariatric specialists are solely dedicated to helping people achieve and maintain their weight loss goals. Scheduling a consultation with one of these experts is as easy as calling 856.673.4500 or requesting an appointment online.

During your consultation, our expert bariatric team will conduct a thorough evaluation and take time to learn what you want to achieve with your weight loss. For example, some people want to lose weight to become candidates for knee replacement surgery, whereas others may want to achieve better control their diabetes or to be able to run a 5K.

Understanding your goals helps us to tailor a comprehensive weight loss plan. Your plan may or may not include surgery.



Laurie A.
Cooper Bariatric Surgery Patient
Went from a size 20 to a size 8

Exploring Surgical Options

If surgery is recommended, the specialists at Cooper's Center for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery will work with you step-by-step to ensure that your needs and concerns are addressed and to determine the best type of surgery to suit your unique needs.

It's important not to fall victim to the stigma that surgery is giving up and fear criticism from people who simply don't understand what you may be going through. It's important to base this important decision on what's best for your health.

When making such a life-altering decision, it's important to know that you are working with a compassionate and highly qualified team of surgeons and bariatric professionals. At Cooper University Health Care, our fellowship-trained surgeons have performed thousands of procedures and are the region's leaders in caring for patients who choose weight loss surgery.

Our Center for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery meets rigorous criteria for safe, high-quality surgical care. As a result, the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program has named us an MBSAQIP Accredited—Comprehensive with Adolescent Qualifications Center.

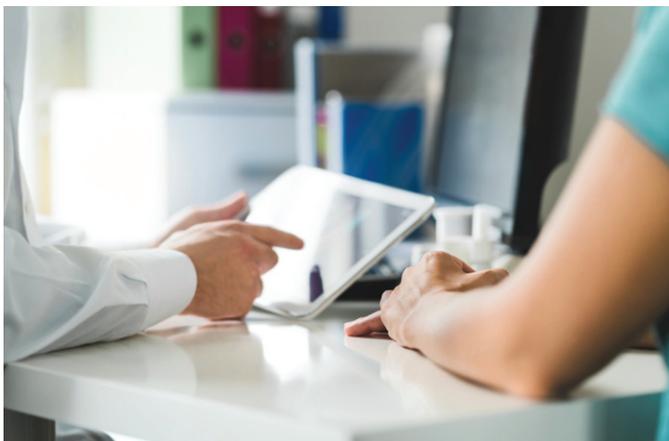
If you decide that surgery is right for you, your surgery consultant will walk you through each of the three main types of surgery—Gastric Banding, Gastric Bypass, and Sleeve Gastrectomy—to help determine which is best for your individual needs.

Managing Your Health Before and After Surgery

Once you've decided on surgery, Cooper's team will help you to schedule the necessary presurgical testing and evaluations. These evaluations are a safeguard to ensure that your body is capable of handling the surgery itself as well as the postoperative recovery process. You'll also meet with our team psychologist to determine your emotional preparedness and confirm that you have a strong support system, such as dedicated family and friends.

Next, to make sure that your procedure is as effective as possible, you'll begin to establish a new health and weight loss plan. Losing weight before surgery will help to reduce the overall risk of surgery, increase the effectiveness of the procedure, and ease postsurgery recovery.

Along with recommended dietary changes, including modest exercise in your day-to-day life will help to establish a solid basis of health. As a start, you should plan to walk at least 20 minutes every day (in addition to any activity you engage in at work), with a goal of performing 30 to 45 minutes of daily exercise.



Immediately after surgery, you'll probably spend 1 to 2 days in the hospital. This allows our expert team of physicians to monitor your progress to allow a safe discharge to home.

In the months after your weight loss surgery, you'll return to our Center for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery regularly for follow-up care. To ensure the smoothest recovery possible, our expert physicians and advanced practice nurses are available 24/7. We're always here to help with your questions or concerns.

After the first year has passed your visits will be less frequent. You'll need to visit the Center for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery once every 6 to 12 months so that we can check in on your progress and answer questions about your weight loss and overall health. After the second year, only a yearly follow-up is necessary to ensure that your weight loss plan remains on track.

Accessing Support Services

When planning such a life-changing event, it's important to have a strong support system. Having encouraging and supportive family and friends is a big help, as is having a dedicated care team that offers a variety of support services. At Cooper, we offer our bariatric patients several helpful services to assist with the weight loss journey.



Health Insurance Coordination

Weight loss surgery and the required preoperative testing are typically covered expenses for most private and public health insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. Our financial team will help you to verify benefit and insurance coverage and identify any associated out-of-pocket expenses.

Each insurance plan requires patients to comply with certain rules before surgery can be planned. We will assist you with everything, helping to ease the process of obtaining approval for your surgery and scheduling your appointments for required preoperative testing.



Nutrition Consultations

Our dietitians will meet with you periodically to ensure that you're following the required diet—one that is meticulously tailored to your body's needs. This diet will help you to sustain your weight loss, ensuring an effective long-term outcome.

There are many specific requirements for the postsurgery diet, but one of the keys is eating smaller meals more frequently, especially meals that are rich in protein and low in carbohydrates. Your bariatric team will also advise you on specific vitamin and mineral supplements to optimize your individual results.



Emotional Support and Monthly Group Meetings

After weight loss surgery, you will experience many changes, both physical and mental. As a result, some patients often seek out additional emotional support.

Cooper has a team of on-site psychologists. These compassionate professionals work with patients and discuss the mental milestones and emotions that accompany recovery.

You can also take advantage of our monthly group meetings. This welcoming setting allows patients to share their experiences and offer each other support.



Postsurgery Workout Plan

Regular physical exercise is an integral part of the recovery process after minimally invasive weight loss surgery.

Not everyone is used to maintaining a regular workout regimen, and if that applies to you, don't worry. We've got you covered. We offer a variety of exercise groups and classes, and we have a physical therapy team to help with your exercise needs.





Minimally Invasive Weight Loss Surgery at Cooper

If you're struggling with obesity, weight loss surgery—also called metabolic and bariatric surgery—may enable you to lose weight and keep it off for life. At Cooper University Health Care's Center for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, we provide multidisciplinary, lifelong care to people who choose to undergo weight loss surgery.

Our specialists are solely dedicated to helping people with obesity or morbid obesity achieve

and maintain their weight loss goals. Surgery can also help to treat obesity-related health conditions, such as diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure, allowing you to live a longer and healthier life.

To schedule an appointment or consultation with Cooper's Center for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, schedule **online** or call **856.673.4500**.

To join us for a free weight loss surgery informational seminar, register **[here](#)**.



To schedule an appointment or consultation, visit cooperhealth.org/Bariatrics or call **856.673.4500**