



NORTHWEST HOSPITAL
& MEDICAL CENTER

Med-Info

A Health Magazine Connecting Northwest Hospital & Medical Center with Our Community



May/June 2007

Inside:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Weight-Loss Surgery Transforms a Life | 2 |
| Seattle Breast Center Goes All-Digital | 4 |
| Hospital Receives Patient Safety Award | 7 |
| In the Community | 8 |

Weight-Loss Surgery Brings Freedom from Limitations



For 27-year-old Katie Whitmore, life is about firsts: her first time in an airplane without worrying if the seat belt would fit. The first time she went on the swings with her first-grade students at recess. Her first shopping trip to a store that had regular sizes. The first time she got through an entire day without back pain.

A little over a year ago, Whitmore, who is 5' 4", weighed 305 pounds. Based on the ratio of her height to her weight – or her body mass index (BMI) – she was considered super morbidly obese. In the United States, more than 50 million people are obese and more than 400,000 deaths a year can be attributed to obesity. Obesity can also lead to serious health conditions including diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, asthma, osteoarthritis and gout, reflux, back problems and many others.

Whitmore had struggled with her weight for a number of years and had been on multiple supervised diets without any sustained success. “I kept thinking I could try one more time and do it on my own,” she says. She suffered from back pain and sleep apnea and could not climb stairs or walk long distances without becoming short of breath.

“Whenever I planned to do anything with anyone, I had to think about my weight. Could I do it? Could I keep up? Even something as simple as walking with a friend, I had to think about whether I could make it.”

Towards the end of 2005, Whitmore’s sister and brother-in-law told her they were having a baby. “It made me realize that my life had been on hold. I was waiting until I lost weight to do all of these things and I was tired of fighting the battle,” she says. “I wanted the energy, focus and freedom to do whatever I wanted with all the kids in my life that I love so dearly – my students, cousins and new little niece – as well as the children and family I hope to someday have.”

After talking about her feelings with a close friend, Whitmore decided to take another look at weight-loss, or bariatric, surgery. She had researched bariatric surgery in the past but had never gone further. With the encouragement of her friend, who agreed to go with her, Whitmore registered for an informational seminar led by Dr. Joseph Chebli of Northwest Hospital’s Bariatric Surgery Program.

“We think it’s critical to educate patients by presenting data, medical evidence and the pros and cons of every procedure available, not just the ones we do here at the hospital,” says Chebli. “Then we help patients work through who they are, what their expectations and goals are and what option might be right for them. Patients need to know they have choices, and that they should take time to find the place and procedure that’s right for them.”

There are several types of bariatric surgery, each appropriate for different types of patients. The most common procedures include:

Adjustable Gastric Banding (LapBand®) which involves placing a silicone band or LapBand® around the upper part of the stomach to reduce the volume of food the stomach is able to hold and to increase the feeling of fullness.

Gastric bypass is currently the most popular procedure. Done either through laparoscopic or open surgery, it involves forming a small gastric pouch to restrict food intake and shortening the gastro-intestinal tract to reduce the absorption of food.

The Bariatric Surgery Program at Northwest Hospital offers a comprehensive and personalized approach. Patients participate in a multi-disciplinary weight-loss program, which includes nutritional, emotional and exercise counseling, as well as careful post-surgery medical follow-up and monitoring. The program also offers a support group for patients in all stages of the weight-loss surgery process, even those just beginning to research the procedure.

Whitmore, who had received clearance from her doctor to have the surgery, came for an extensive consultation with Dr. Chebli. They decided on a laparoscopic gastric bypass procedure. Whitmore then received a pre-operative checklist, which required a full range of tests, as well as consultation with a nutritionist and a psychological evaluation.

“I felt immediately comfortable with Dr. Chebli and the entire team,” says Whitmore. “Everyone was so nice and supportive and helpful. It was my first time ever having surgery, but Dr. Chebli walked me through every step of the process and told me everything I needed to know. He was very detailed and straightforward about what the program required.”

continued on page 2

Cover Story Continued . . .

Post surgery, Whitmore's diet and eating habits have changed dramatically. For several weeks following her gastric bypass, she had to puree the food she ate. Even after returning to regular food, the amount she could eat was limited, so she had to be vigilant about eating enough protein and taking dietary supplements to ensure she was getting proper nutrition. "It took a while to figure out what I could eat and how much, especially when I ate out, but now, a year out from my surgery, it feels normal."

"I worked really hard at changing my life. Surgery is a tool, but you can't rely on the procedure alone or your weight loss won't be successful for you. It's not an easy way out. If you're thinking about this kind of surgery, you need to research and talk to people who have had it before. You need to prepare yourself to work at it every day."

Whitmore says all the hard work has been worth it. In the year since her surgery, she has lost 140 pounds – more than 81% of her excess body weight, and much more than the 70% excess weight loss that is the national average.

Many people don't even recognize the slim, athletic woman she has become. "People who knew me before my weight loss do a lot of double takes. I'm getting used to the idea of being attractive all over again," she laughs.

Whitmore has poured her new-found energy into sports and outdoor activities. She plays on a softball team, hikes, bikes, skis and runs. Currently, she is training for a 5K and plans to run another 10K in the fall.

Chebli says Katie's above-average weight loss has been outstanding, but is not all that unusual for patients in the program. "Our team is tremendously dedicated to each person's success and we take a lot of time with each patient that comes to us. There are no shortcuts. The program is rigorous and comprehensive, but always in the best interest of our patients. These are things we feel strongly about and, as a result, our patients enjoy better outcomes with fewer complications."

"I've had nothing but positives," says Whitmore, whose friends, family and students call her inspiring. "All of the restrictions and limitations on my life have been lifted and I am truly experiencing freedom to do what I want to do, to try new things and to really live the life I was meant to live."

For more information on obesity, visit www.northwestobesitysurgery.com or www.obesityhelp.com. For more information on the Bariatric Surgery Program at Northwest Hospital, or to register for a free informational seminar, call (206) 368-1350 (outside of Seattle, call (877) 839-8916) or visit www.nwhospital.org.



"All of the restrictions and limitations on my life have been lifted and I am truly experiencing freedom to do what I want to do, to try new things and to really live the life I was meant to live."

-Katie Whitmore, Bariatric Surgery Patient

Race for The Cure - June 16th

@ Qwest Field

Join the Seattle Breast Center and Northwest Hospital Team in The Komen Race for the Cure. Register online by May 11 at www.komenpugetsound.org.

Northgate Festival - August 11-12th

@ Northwest Hospital OPMC

Third annual family Northgate Festival, at OPMC: Health fair, senior area, free rides and activities for kids, continuous entertainment on the music stage, commercial and art exhibits, arts and crafts booths, food, roving clowns and much more! Free parking and admission.

Music Appreciation Week - August 13-17th

@ Northwest Hospital

Fourth annual Music Appreciation Week with daily live performances from a wide array of local talent, including jazz, rock and classical musicians. Be ready to listen from noon to 1:30 p.m. daily, outside the Cafeteria Solarium on the Northwest Hospital Main Campus.



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To contact us about the newsletter, e-mail newsletters@nwhsea.org or call (206) 368-1645.

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Visit www.nwhospital.org for information and directions.

The Seattle Breast Center Goes All-Digital

Women walking into the Seattle Breast Center at Northwest Hospital starting this May might not notice anything different immediately. They'll be visiting the same convenient facility and interacting with the same dedicated team that has been caring for them for years, but they'll soon discover one very important change. The Seattle Breast Center is now an all-digital facility, one of only a few in Washington State providing digital mammography to all patients.

"Digital mammograms are for all women," says Dr. Katherine Dee, a breast radiology specialist at the Seattle Breast Center. "Everyone who should be getting a screening mammogram should get a digital mammogram." However, she points out, a national trial in which more than 49,000 women were screened with both a digital and a standard mammogram found that digital mammography was better in particular at finding cancers in women under age 50, women with dense breast tissue, and women who had not yet reached menopause or who were just approaching menopause.

Additionally, digital mammography, combined with computer-aided detection, or CAD, improves cancer detection. The computer software marks potential areas of concern on the mammogram, alerting the radiologist to findings that may require further attention. "While CAD certainly does not detect all cancers, we have found it to be beneficial to our patients," notes Dee. "As with any technology, it is how you use it that matters."

Annual mammograms are generally recommended for all women over age forty. While there is some variation, depending on individual health and family history, the mammogram has long been accepted as the best way to assure breast health when combined with monthly self-examination of the breast.

Upgrades to the Seattle Breast Center are comprehensive. Among the improvements are three new digital acquisition mammography machines, super-accurate, computer aided detection review stations, two state-of-the-art computerized radiologist work stations, a new stereotactic biopsy table and picture archiving workstations throughout the suite.

The benefits of a digital system are many. "The technology allows a lower dose of radiation to acquire the image, so there's less exposure for the patient," explains Dee. The technologist is able to view the images on a workstation in the room to determine if the exam is finished. The result of this in-room image processing is a quicker exam and less wait time for patients. "With digital mammography, we don't have to move the pictures around, and wait for someone to prepare them before we can take a look at them," Dee adds.

Dee says all-digital mammography puts Northwest several steps ahead in terms of readiness for the next developments in breast

care and cancer prevention and diagnosis. "There are a lot of computer-related enhancements imaging specialists can do with digital mammograms and there are new, complementary technologies, such as tomosynthesis, that we can explore in conjunction with digital mammography to provide even more effective care."

Digital mammography isn't the only thing that sets the Seattle Breast Center apart.

The Seattle Breast Center is one of only three centers in Washington to provide breast MRI and MRI-guided biopsy in the same location. MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging, has appeared in recent headlines following the announcement of new recommendations from the American Cancer Society that call for annual breast MRIs for women with a strong family history of breast and/or ovarian cancer. Dee says the Seattle Breast Center has been in compliance with these recommendations since 2003, when it began providing breast MRI exams. An important plus: Seattle Breast Center patients don't have to go elsewhere for diagnostic procedures such as MRI-guided needle biopsy, and follow-up care.

"We've been telling our patients all along that this was going to become the standard of care, and now it is," Dee says.

The Seattle Breast Center performs about 500 breast MRIs a year, and those numbers are growing. "An expert at Memorial Sloan-Kettering was quoted in a recent New York Times article recommending breast MRI only from a center with a lot of experience with the procedure. At the Seattle Breast Center, a qualified breast imaging radiologist interprets the results, and if necessary, we have the capability to do an MRI-guided biopsy right here," Dee adds.

Not every breast center has radiologists that specialize in breast radiology. Dee is a board certified breast radiologist and Dr. Craig Hanson, the center's medical director, has been focused on breast radiology for more than 20 years.

"Having the right people using the right technology makes this level of care possible. It's about both technology and teamwork," says Dee, who joins with mammography technologists, breast sonographers, oncologists and surgeons to address the specific needs of each individual patient. "We see our patients as more than just cases and we strive to provide more than screening, diagnosis and treatment. We want to be an accessible health resource for all our patients and for the larger community as well."

For more information about the Seattle Breast Center, call (206) 368-1749 or visit www.nwhospital.org. To schedule an appointment, call (206) 368-5950.



CANCER LIFELINE CLASSES & SUPPORT GROUPS

Cancer Lifeline at Northwest Hospital is located in the Professional Building in Suite 3. All classes and groups are free and open to the public. Call 1 (800) 255-5505 or (206) 297-2500 for more information or to register. You can also register online at www.cancerlifeline.org.

Drop-In Chat:

Drop in and chat with our trained lifeline responders over a cup of tea. No registration necessary. Tuesdays, May 8 - June 26.

Brain Cancer Support Group

Drop in any time - no registration necessary. Second Tuesdays of the month, 6-7:30 p.m.

Breast Cancer Support Group

Drop in any time - no registration necessary. First and third Wednesdays of the month: 4:30-6 p.m.

Colorectal Cancer Support Group

Drop in any time - no registration necessary. First Wednesdays of the month, 7-8:30 p.m.

Lung Cancer Support Group

Drop in any time - no registration necessary. Second and fourth Thursdays of the month, 7-8:30 p.m.

Reclaiming Your Life

Wondering where to go for support after you have finished treatment? Come to this 8-week group for women who are at least 3 months past completion of treatment. Intake interview and registration required. Call (425) 299-7753.

Gentle Yoga

Enjoy easy stretches, postures and guided meditation. Please register. Start any time during the series. Saturdays, May 5 - June 23, 10-11:30 a.m.

Belly Dancing

Stretch and tone your entire body while having fun with the ancient art of belly

dance. Physician's release is required for those in treatment within the last year. Please register. Tuesdays, May 8 - June 19, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Lymphedema Exercise, Lebed Method

This gentle and fun exercise program combines easy stretches, strengthening and aerobic movement with great music! Appropriate during or after cancer treatment and for anyone with (or at risk for) lymphedema. Please register. Fine to start this class at any time during the series. Mondays, May 7 - June 25 (no class May 28), 12-1 p.m.

Stay after class to speak with Northwest Hospital & Medical Center lymphedema therapists about how to prevent and treat lymphedema on May 21, 1-1:30 p.m.

Scrapbooking & Visual Journaling

Adding images to writing can be a fun and powerful way of heightening your journal-keeping experience! Please register. Saturdays, May 12 & 19, June 2 (no class May 26), 1-3 p.m.

Fighting Cancer with a Fork

Learn the top ten super foods to help fight cancer; foods to boost immunity and nutrition strategies to manage cancer treatment-related side effects. Please register. Thursday, May 31, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Developing Allies in Healing

Using compassionate communication at the doctor's office.

Based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg, this interactive workshop will introduce this process of clear, non-judgemental communication which can help you express your concerns to medical staff and develop allies in healing. Please register. Saturday, June 9, 12:30-3:30 p.m.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

Childbirth, parenting, and new baby classes are offered in conjunction with Gracewinds Perinatal Services. All classes are held on the Northwest Hospital campus. Please call Gracewinds Perinatal Services at (206) 781-9871 or visit www.gracewindsprenatal.com/nwclasses for scheduling and registration information.

Childbirth Prep Series

A four- and seven-week course that is designed to give expectant parents the tools and information needed during childbirth. This course is also available in a condensed weekend format.

Cost: Four Week, \$115 per couple
Seven Week, \$200 per couple
Weekend, \$125 per couple

New Family Skills

This important class addresses the specific changes that affect new parents. Costs: \$40 per couple

Newborn Care Class

This course is an excellent primer for first time parents, grandparents and baby-sitters. Costs: \$40 per couple

Infant Safety/CPR

A class designed to give new parents, grandparents and baby-sitters the skills to help prevent accidents, to perform infant CPR and to relieve an obstructed airway. This class does not provide a CPR certification card.

Cost: \$40 per couple

Breast-feeding Basics

This class is designed to educate parents on proper feeding techniques and positioning. Cost: \$40 per couple

Foundations for Fatherhood

A class for expectant dads. Taught by an experienced father, this popular class addresses topics and issues associated with fathering. Cost: \$30

*Comprehensive Education Package
Purchase all six classes and save \$70.
Package Cost: \$245 per couple*

Classes, Lectures, Support Groups and Research Studies

May-June 2007 (Continued)

EMERGENCY SERVICES EDUCATION

CPR Training

Learn life-saving skills from Medic II personnel. Offered on the third Tuesday of each month, 7-10 p.m. Registration required. Call (206) 368-1564 for more information. Cost: Donations are greatly appreciated. Checks should be made out to Medic II CPR.

PRENATAL SERVICES

Baby Your Back

Back pain is a frequent complaint of pregnant women and has many causes. Baby Your Back is a two-hour class for expectant mothers taught by a licensed physical therapist. It is offered the second Thursday of each month at Northwest Physical Therapy Services, located in Northwest Hospital & Medical Center's Outpatient Medical Center. Cost: \$10. Call (206) 368-6032 to register. Healthcare provider referral required.

SUPPORT GROUPS

The Journey Through Grief

A six-week support group for those coping with the death of a loved one. In this safe and non-judgmental environment participants will focus on the normal aspects of grieving and the grief-work tasks, consider ways of providing self-care, and develop coping strategies for getting through difficult times. Next group series: Tuesdays, 6-8:30 p.m. on June 12, 19, 26, and July 10, 17 and 24 (please note: no group meeting on July 3).

Pre-registration is required. Please call the Spiritual and Grief Counselor at (206) 368-1891.

*NEW - Diabetes Support Group, Resource and Network

Join the diabetes instruction team to learn about and discuss topics such as: meal planning, blood glucose monitoring devices, weight loss, treatment for high and low blood sugars, medication management, dietary supplements, diabetes myth busters, monitoring for complications, and what's new in diabetes research and technology.

Second Tuesday of each month 1-2:30 p.m. and third Thursday of each month 7-8:30 p.m. To register visit www.nwhospital.org and click on "Classes, Events, & Support Groups" or call (206) 368-1564.

WELLNESS CLASSES

Living Well with Diabetes

This program has been formally recognized for excellence by the American Diabetes Association. Participants will gain information and skills to manage diabetes in this four-session series offered monthly. Note: Physician referral is required for class. Day and evening classes available. For more information contact your physician, or call (206) 368-1564 to receive a brochure.

*NEW - Make it Right!

How does kalbi chicken stir fry with coconut rice or balsamic-honey glazed pork chops with provence potatoes sound? Northwest Hospital and Dinner's Ready in Lake Forest Park, have joined

forces for two exciting, educational, and delicious evenings making meals designed to your individual nutritional needs and goals for you to take home. Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and/or cholesterol? No worries. With the guidance and knowledge of Northwest's registered dietitians, lowering carbohydrate, sugar and fat are made easy.

Spaces are limited, so register early. Wednesday, May 23 and Tuesday, May 29 from 6-8 p.m. For more information and to register, please call (206) 417-1250.

Qigong for People with Parkinson's

An ancient form of exercise derived from China combining physical postures with breathing techniques. Taught by certified qigong instructor. Held every Monday at 9:30 a.m. Registration required. Call the Deep Brain Stimulation Program to register and receive confirmation of location at (206) 368-5935.

Weight Loss Surgery Education

Is Weight Loss Surgery Right For You? Join us for a free informational seminar to learn more about: weight loss surgery options and risks; patient selection criteria; nutritional requirements; and insurance coverage. Question and answer segment to follow each talk. All sessions are free and are held on the Northwest Hospital Campus. Call (206) 368-1350 to reserve your space today. May 10 & 23 and June 13 & 27, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

MAY 2007							JUNE 2007						
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Northwest Hospital & Medical Center Wins Distinguished Hospital Award For Patient Safety

Did you know that Northwest Hospital & Medical Center is one of the safest places in the country to receive medical care?

Based on a study of patient safety in U.S. hospitals, HealthGrades® has named Northwest Hospital among the top 5% of hospitals in the U.S. and has awarded it the 2007 Distinguished Hospital Award for Patient Safety™. Northwest Hospital is one of only 242 organizations in the nation, and one of only seven in Washington State to receive the award.

HealthGrades is an independent organization that rates hospitals, nursing homes and medical practitioners on a wide variety of criteria and makes those ratings available to the general public. As more and more consumers look for information to help them make healthcare decisions, these ratings have become increasingly important. Patients want to be treated at safe hospitals and medical professionals want to practice at them.

Patient safety is defined as “freedom from accidental injury due to medical care, or medical errors.” Medical error is defined as “the failure of a planned action to be completed as intended or the use of a wrong plan to achieve an aim [including] problems in practice, products, procedures, and systems.”

In its “Fourth Annual Patient Safety in American Hospitals Study,” HealthGrades independently analyzed almost 40 million Medicare patient records from nearly 5000 nonfederal hospitals over a three-year period, using 13 patient safety indicators developed by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). The 13 patient safety indicators measured in the study included:

- Death in illness or medical procedure categories that typically have a low mortality rate
- Decubitus ulcer (pressure or bed sore)
- Failure to rescue
- Foreign body left in during procedure
- Iatrogenic pneumothorax (collapsed lung)
- Select infections due to medical care
- Post-operative hip fracture
- Post-operative hemorrhage or hematoma
- Post-operative physiologic and metabolic derangements, or complications
- Post-operative respiratory failure
- Post-operative pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis (blood clot)
- Post-operative sepsis (bacterial infection of the blood stream)
- Post-operative abdominal wound dehiscence (rupture)

Analysis showed that Northwest Hospital had one of the lowest rates of adverse patient-safety incidents among its Medicare patients. In fact, according to the study, patients at hospitals

that receive the Distinguished Hospital Award for Patient Safety are, on average, 40 percent less likely to experience an adverse, preventable event during their stay.

“We are especially proud to receive this award from HealthGrades, as it recognizes years of daily, behind-the-scenes efforts by each member of our staff to ensure patient safety and quality care,” said C. William Schneider, CEO of Northwest Hospital & Medical Center. “From our physicians and nurses who interact one-on-one with patients, to the dozens of committees and small working groups that come together to examine policies and procedures, I am delighted that this award will serve as a public acknowledgment of the hard work of so many people.”

For more information about quality and patient safety initiatives, visit the Northwest Hospital website at www.nwhospital.org. To access a full copy of the “Fourth Annual Patient Safety in American Hospitals” study, go to the HealthGrades website at www.healthgrades.com.



Northwest Hospital is committed to creating a culture of quality care and a safe patient environment in compliance with these and other quality and safety goals.

The Joint Commission's 2007 National Patient Safety Goals:

1. Improve the accuracy of patient identification;
2. Improve the effectiveness of communication among caregivers;
3. Improve the safety of using medications;
4. Reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections;
5. Accurately and completely reconcile medications across the continuum of care;
6. Reduce the risk of patient harm resulting from falls;
7. Encourage patient's active involvement in their own care as a patient safety strategy; and
8. The organization identifies safety risks inherent in its patient population.

Tune in for the "Northwest Hospital Health Tip of the Day" on Star 101.5



Now listeners of Star 101.5 (KPLZ-FM) can get healthier even while they're sitting in traffic. Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday morning at 7:40, Star 101.5 presents the Northwest Hospital Health Tip of the Day. On-air personality Ana Kelly has teamed with Northwest Hospital physicians and staff to bring listeners useful information and interviews about diet, fitness and preventing disease. After they air, the tips are posted on the Star 101.5 website (www.star1015.com), as well as on the Northwest Hospital site (www.nwhospital.org). Tune in to learn how to live a happier, healthier life!



Northwest Hospital Brings Screenings and Services to Healthy Living Expo

In March, Northwest Hospital hosted one of the largest booths at the KING 5 Healthy Living Expo, the region's biggest annual health and fitness event. More than 40,000 people attended the weekend-long show, held at Qwest Exhibition Center. In the theater area of the booth, Northwest Hospital physicians, staff and affiliates led a full schedule of classes, seminars and activities. Session topics ranged from weight-loss surgery to treatment for varicose veins to reducing cardiac risk through exercise to emergency preparedness. Particularly popular was a therapeutic yoga class held each day. Hundreds of people also visited the booth to receive free screenings, including blood glucose, blood pressure, foot screenings and ankle brachial index screenings, a test that screens for peripheral arterial disease. Expo attendees also had the opportunity to consult with a doctor in the booth, as well as pick up a wide variety of information on Northwest Hospital's services. Northwest Hospital expects to appear again at next year's show, currently scheduled for April 19 and 20, 2008.



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