

A Whole New

Person

Kettering helps one woman lose nearly half her body weight, and find a happier, healthier lifestyle

TAMMY JONES HAS A FULL AND ACTIVE LIFE. But being overweight was really making it tough to do all the things she wanted and needed to do.

A little more than two years ago, the 5-foot, 1-inch Jones weighed about 220 pounds. The registered nurse was starting to suffer from pain in her back, hips, knees and feet. Plus, she has a family history of diabetes and high blood pressure, both of which can be aggravated by being overweight. Her blood pressure was heading upward and her cholesterol was on the high side, too.

The mother of three children, ages 20, 17 and 10, Jones also is in school to earn her master's degree to be a nurse practitioner.

"With everything I have going on, I need all the energy I can get," she explains. "I didn't have any energy and I wanted to avoid high blood pressure and diabetes, so I knew I had to lose weight."

That's when she turned to Weight Loss Surgery at Kettering Medical Center and Sycamore Medical Center. Named a Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence by the American Society for



Tammy Jones plays some basketball with her 10-year-old son, Thomas.

Bariatric Surgery, Kettering's Weight Loss Surgery Center provides a range of services that go far beyond surgical procedures.

"We're committed to providing a comprehensive level of support before, during and after surgery, and I think that's what sets us apart," says John Wade, Psy.D., bariatric psychological services coordinator and interim program manager for Weight Loss Surgery. "A patient who is well-informed and educated—and has a good support network—is going to optimize their chances of success."

At the center, people interested in surgery first attend an informational seminar, where a surgeon explains the various procedures. Then they meet one-on-one with a surgeon to discuss their lifestyle, needs and appropriate options.

This is followed by an educational seminar led by a psychologist, a dietitian and an exercise physiologist, so surgical candidates understand the lifestyle changes required after surgery. They are also evaluated by a psychologist, who recommends additional support and education they may need prior to surgery.

(start your new life now) Find out if you're eligible for weight loss surgery. Register to attend a FREE seminar at ketteringweightloss.org or call **877-574-0168**.

Changes for Life

"It can't be overemphasized that this is a lifelong change," says David Schumacher, M.D., of Kettering Bariatrics and bariatric surgery medical director for Sycamore Medical Center. "The patient has to be willing to make a conscious effort to change their habits or they'll regain weight, regardless of the surgery they have."

He adds that 99 percent of the surgeries at Weight Loss Surgery are performed using minimally invasive techniques, which decrease recovery time and reduce the risk of wound infections and other surgical complications.

A series of post-surgical follow-up appointments with the surgeon, as well as a dietitian and exercise physiologist, are included in the cost of the surgery. There are also free support groups available before and after surgery.

Jones chose the lap band procedure, which was performed in March 2007. She now weighs 120 pounds, a healthy weight for her height of 5'1". The 47-year-old continues to eat a healthy diet and exercises regularly, and no longer needs medication to control her blood pressure.

"We see a lot of patients coming off their medications after they start losing weight," says Nancy J. Winfrey, B.A., practice manager at Kettering Bariatrics. "And that weight loss often encourages them to make other lifestyle changes, too."

For Jones, the surgery was life-changing. She's delighted to have more energy to play golf, get out and spend time with her kids, shoot baskets with her youngest son, Thomas—and do all the other things she enjoys.

"You just feel better about yourself, and when you're happy that reflects on everyone around you," Jones says. "I feel so much better and just wish I'd done this a long time ago." ❖

Winning Tips for Weight Loss

People who have had weight loss surgery need to make some lifestyle modifications, many of which are also good strategies for people who are trying to lose weight without surgery.

Watch portion sizes. One-half to one cup is a sensible serving of a food like potatoes or vegetables. A serving of protein should be about the size of a deck of cards.

Eat the most nutritious and filling foods first. Start with your protein and veggies.

Pass on the junk food. It has little or no nutritional value, but a ton of unnecessary calories.

Exercise. It's not just for weight loss—it's good for your overall health. Look for exercise options that are fun, or just add activity like taking the stairs instead of the elevator.

