

The Lowdown

Spring 2026 | VOLUME 14 | Issue 3

COMPREHENSIVE WEIGHT LOSS CENTER

HURLEY

Inside this issue

Preparing for Bariatric Surgery.....	1
Focus on Fitness.....	1
Nutrition Notes.....	2
Spotlight on Success.....	2
Hip Happenings.....	3
Recipe Round-up.....	3



Mentally Preparing for Bariatric Surgery

Bariatric surgery is the most powerful tool for achieving improved health through weight loss. However, it is a major life decision that requires mental and emotional preparation to be successful long-term. Many changes occur after surgery and some of the biggest changes can be mentally challenging at times. Understanding these challenges is key to help ensure a smoother and more successful post-surgery journey.

Before undergoing bariatric surgery, it's important to understand your "why". Are you doing it to improve a medical diagnosis? To have more mobility? To be able to watch your grandchildren grow up? Having a clear, personal "why" or reason for surgery is going to help with motivation when challenges arise.

Before surgery, reflect on your current relationship with food. If you tend to use food to cope with

stress, boredom, etc., now is the time to find nonfood ways to manage these emotions. This may include physical activity, reading, journaling, talking with a friend, or possibly seeking help from a licensed therapist or psychologist to help address these underlying issues prior to surgery.

Make sure you have trusted friends and family that you can depend on. Having a strong support system that you can lean on during your journey makes a huge difference. Attending a bariatric support group before surgery can also be helpful to address any questions or concerns and provide an additional layer of support.

Remember, bariatric surgery is not a magical "cure all" when it comes to weight loss. However, mental preparation can be just the magic tool you need to help you approach surgery with the best mindset possible for long-term success.

Focus On Fitness

Low Impact Indoor Workouts

Thankfully, warm weather is on its way. However, as the old adage says, "April showers bring May flowers." Therefore, some days you may still need to rely on an indoor workout. The following is a list of low-impact workouts that are easy to do indoors. Do not let the weather keep you from reaching your fitness goals!

1. **Walking Indoors or Marching in Place** – you can walk laps around your living space, follow along with a guided indoor walking video, or march in place while watching TV.
2. **Bodyweight Circuits** – no equipment needed! You can use your body weight as resistance and create

3. **Chair Exercises** – these types of exercise are great for early post-op patients who may have limited mobility as you can work your entire body while staying seated.
4. **Resistance Band Strength Training** – resistance bands provide tension that can help build muscle. A plus is that they are also affordable and easy to travel with!
5. **Gentle Yoga** – a great option for early post-op patients. Yoga can help the body adjust to/learn new movement patterns, alleviate stress, and promote mental clarity!

by Myckayla Myers, RDN

Why Hydration matters

It is well-known that hydration status impacts health. But you might not know exactly how it affects us and why good hydration is so important.

What happens to the body when dehydrated?

Poor fluid intake causes the release of a hormone called vasopressin. This tells the kidneys to hold onto water, which causes the kidneys stress. Vasopressin also increased the release of cortisol. Cortisol is known as the “stress hormone.” Research shows that chronically increased cortisol levels can cause increased inflammation and decreased immune function.

Dehydration also affects the heart/cardiovascular system as, when dehydrated, blood tends to be thicker and the body releases hormones that constrict (or narrow) blood vessels. Together, this causes the heart to have to work harder to pump the thicker blood through the body, which can lead to hypertension and, ultimately, more serious issues, such as a stroke.

According to neuroscience research, our brains are comprised of approximately 70-80% water. If not properly hydrated the brain will have a harder time performing normal everyday tasks. This can look like poor concentration, decreased cognitive function, and poor memory. Additionally, the brain can confuse thirst with hunger, leading people to eat more when they are not actually hungry, just dehydrated. This

increased intake of calories can lead to unwanted weight gain.

Dehydration affects your muscular system as well. Without proper fluid intake, muscles are more easily broken down leading to reduced muscle mass, which can decrease calorie burn, immune function, and more.

Signs of dehydration

One of the best indicators of hydration status is urine color. When well-hydrated urine should be light yellow in color as a darker yellow color is an indication of dehydration. Other symptoms include dry mouth and/or chapped lips, fatigue, muscle cramps, confusion, and dizziness.

How to stay hydrated

For most people, consuming about 8 cups (64 oz) of fluid a day is enough to maintain good hydration. If you are very physically active or tend to sweat a lot, you may need more. Some fluid needs can be met by eating hydrating foods like fruits and vegetables, but the majority will come from drinking liquids. Water is the best option and it’s a good idea to consume at least half of your daily fluids from plain water. If having something other than water make sure to reach for a non-carbonated option with 5 gm or less of sugar. Some good options include:

- Herbal tea or decaffeinated tea/coffee
- Infused Water (like lemon or cucumber water)
- Zero-calorie flavored water (Crystal Lite Pure, Hint, etc.)
- Low-sodium broths

Spotlight on Success



Nicholas **Before & After**
Gastric Bypass

In September 2023, I underwent gastric bypass surgery and have since lost approximately 260 pounds. The impact on my quality of life has been profound, often in ways I did not fully realize were a problem. Beyond the major milestones, the simple, everyday moments first made the biggest impact. Being able to complete a grocery shopping trip on my own, without struggling to breathe, was a powerful realization that I had been living with countless small limitations that I had grown accustomed to over the years.

Losing the weight has provided me with a renewed sense of physical, emotional, and mental freedom. This journey has truly given me my life back. It has also restored a level of confidence I had not felt in years. Carrying both the physical and emotional weight had taken a significant toll on me. Overcoming these challenges has shown me that I am capable of achieving anything I set my mind to.

I can attribute my success to three key factors. First, having a strong support team, both personally and medically, has made an incredible difference. My support system celebrates my successes, encourages me during setbacks, and

reminds me of my goals when I feel discouraged. Their presence helps me to stay focused so I can continue moving forward.

Second, maintaining realistic expectations. Recognizing that this is as much an emotional journey as it is a physical one is essential. Understanding that setbacks are a natural part of any meaningful change has helped me persevere during difficult moments. Real progress does not happen overnight, and meaningful transformation requires patience, resilience, and consistent effort.

Finally, connecting with someone who was on a similar path provided me with invaluable encouragement. I met my “surgery twin” through an online support group. We had surgery on the same day and shared experiences throughout our journeys. Having someone who truly understood the challenges, milestones, and emotions from a firsthand perspective offered a unique level of support and accountability.

This journey has been life-changing, and I am deeply grateful for the growth, strength, and freedom it has brought to my life.



Chicken “Pizza” Crust

Yield: 4 servings
Serving Size: ¼ crust

Ingredients (Crust):

1 lb ground chicken
½ cup low-fat shredded mozzarella cheese or parmesan cheese
1 tsp Italian seasoning
¼ garlic powder
¼ tsp onion powder
¼ tsp pepper

Ingredients (Toppings):

½ cup no sugar added marinara sauce
½ cup low-fat shredded mozzarella cheese
Additional toppings per preference

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Add (uncooked) ground chicken, cheese, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, onion powder, and pepper to a bowl. Mix thoroughly.
3. Move the chicken mixture to the prepared baking sheet and spread it into a round pizza shape, approximately ¼ inch thick. Bake for 20-30 minutes or until there is no moisture on the top of the “crust”.
4. Remove from the oven and add pizza sauce and mozzarella cheese to the top of the crust. Return to the oven for an additional 10 minutes.
5. Remove from heat and let cool slightly before eating. Enjoy!

Nutrition information per serving (Chicken Pizza Crust):

215 calories, 29g pro, 4g carb, 9g fat, 1g fiber

** Tip: To increase the protein and fiber content, add more of your favorite pizza toppings (turkey pepperoni, veggies, etc)! **



High-Protein Buffalo Chicken Dip

Yield: 6 Servings
Serving Size: 1 cup

Ingredients:

3 boneless skinless chicken breast, cooked and shredded
1 cup blended low-fat cottage cheese
½ cup buffalo sauce (such as Frank’s Redhot)
½ cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
1 packet low-sodium ranch seasoning
1 cup low-fat cheddar cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350F.
2. Add cottage cheese to a blender and blend until smooth.
3. Add the cottage cheese, shredded chicken breast, buffalo sauce, Greek yogurt, ranch seasoning, and ½ cup of the cheddar cheese to a bowl. Mix thoroughly.
4. Add the chicken mixture to a 9x9 greased oven safe baking dish and top with the remainder of ½ cup of the cheddar cheese.
5. Bake in oven for 15-20 minutes or until cheese on top is melted and golden brown. Enjoy!

Nutrition information per serving (Buffalo Chicken Dip):

216 calories, 39g pro, 4g carb, 6 g fat, 0g fiber

** Tip: Use your favorite whole grain crackers and non-starchy veggies for dipping to make into a well-balanced meal or more satiating snack! **

Now offering a med-based nonsurgical medical weight loss program!

The Hurley Comprehensive Weight Loss Center offers a med-based nonsurgical medical weight loss program. This program is designed for individuals who are not interested in surgical weight loss, but would like to see if anti-obesity medications, such as Wegovy, Zepbound, Adipex, etc., are a good option for them. If you know of someone who may be interested in this program, have them call our clinic at 810-262-2330 for more information.

The Post-Op Refresher Course!

During this one-hour class you will receive nutrition education from one of our Registered Dietitians regarding meal choices, serving sizes, and general post-op recommendations. This class is designed for Hurley Comprehensive Center Weight Loss patients that are at least one year post-op. It is a great resource if you need help getting back on track or if you just want a general refresher of foundational post-surgery goals! Call to schedule as the course fee is only \$10 and spots are limited.

Support Group:

Join us for our monthly support group! This is open to both pre- and post- surgery patients!

The support group meets the 1st Monday of every month from 5:30-6:30PM at the Hurley Comprehensive Weight Loss Center (with exception of inclement weather/holidays). No need to pre-register— just come! Call 810-262-2330 for details.