

StamfordPatch

NEWS

Stamford Hospital Hosts Free Weight-Loss Seminars

Led by chief of bariatric surgery Dr. Daniel Davis, these free seminars inform potential patients about their surgical and non-surgical weight loss options.

By Christine Brophy 12:02am

Stamford native and surgeon Dr. Daniel Davis warmly addressed a small group of potential patients Thursday night at a weight loss surgery seminar held at the Tully Health Center (<http://stamford.patch.com/listings/tully-health-center-10>).



Free weight loss seminars, scheduled for two evenings a month through April, follow Stamford Hospital (<http://stamford.patch.com/listings/stamford-hospital-main-campus-2>)'s October launch of the Center for Surgical Weight Loss.

Before returning to the city to become the hospital's chief of bariatric surgery, Davis was director of bariatric surgery at Lawrence Hospital in Bronxville, NY, and Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, NJ.



"I always wanted to come back to Stamford and bring this program here," he told Patch.

The approach Stamford Hospital has taken with these seminars is a comprehensive one. Fitness professionals, dietitians, psychologists and weight management experts are all under one roof for weight loss surgery patients, according to Davis.

Those that decide on non-surgical weight loss approaches can also utilize these resources at the center. For those that decide to go with the surgical route, the laparoscopic procedures performed at the hospital are minimally invasive and require only small, fingernail-size incisions. After surgery, patients have a feeling of fullness with lesser amounts of food, Davis said.

"Weight loss surgery is not a quick fix," he said. "It's not a magic bullet. It is another tool to help you get control of weight issues."

However, it can be "literally lifesaving" and will improve or eliminate illnesses such as diabetes, sleep apnea, hypertension, and chronic reflux, he said. The surgery can also reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke and certain cancers associated with obesity.

Dory Ferraro, a nurse practitioner, who has worked on a surgical team with Davis for several years, emphasized the need for a multi-pronged approach to weight issues.

"You need to be ready to change your lifestyle," she said. "You can't eat the same way you are eating now."

With a humorous and lighthearted tone, Davis shared a similar view.

"We're not bypassing the brain," he said. "You still need to make the right food choices."

Attendees of the weight loss seminar received detailed information on pre- and post-surgery nutrition, as well as the pros and cons of the different weight loss laparoscopic procedures.

Those discussed on Thursday included gastric bypass, a procedure where part of stomach and part of the intestine is bypassed, gastric banding, where a band is placed around the top portion of the stomach, and sleeve gastrectomy, where part of stomach is removed, creating a smaller banana-shaped stomach.

To be considered a good candidate for surgery, patients need to have a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or over, or 35 and over if one or more obesity-related health problems exist. Since the procedure is not considered cosmetic, most health insurance companies will cover it. Without insurance, gastric banding can cost \$12,000-\$15,000 and gastric bypass can run from \$18,000-\$25,000.

Seminars are held on select Thursdays between 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Tully Health Center at 32 Strawberry Hill Court. The next seminar is scheduled for Jan. 6. For more information, call 877-233-9355 or visit www.stamfordhospitalweightloss.com (<http://www.stamfordhospitalweightloss.com/>).