



Marc Bessler, MD

Letter from the Director

December 2016

Dear Readers,

In this issue of our newsletter we report on Obesity Week, a meeting of medical specialists focusing on weight control, October 31-November 4, in New Orleans.

- An exciting piece of news: A swallowable gastric balloon was just approved by the FDA, adding to our tools to fight obesity when diet and exercise fail. A gastric balloon expands in the stomach, reducing the patient's urge to overeat. Right now we place gastric balloons in the stomach endoscopically (a non-invasive approach). Soon we will be able to hand patients a pill containing a tiny balloon, eliminating the need for an endoscopic procedure. We will update you on this option in early 2017.
- Other highlights of the meeting were two studies reported in JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association. One shows that people are more productive and take fewer sick days off from work three years after bariatric surgery. Another study answers the question most frequently asked by our patients: "Am I going to regain all the weight I lose through bariatric surgery?" Researchers found that the majority of individuals who chose this approach did not put on the pounds again, and had long-lasting effects.
- Finally, the New Orleans conference focused on the importance of the patient's environment, noting that surgery is beneficial but not meant to be a replacement for exercising, eating well, and keeping to a healthy lifestyle.

With that in mind, I'd like to remind you of our new COMMiT (Comprehensive Obesity and Metabolism Management and Treatment) Program. Our experts offer counseling on nutrition, the treatment of

diabetes, and psychosocial support, and provide a three tiered approach to weight loss, including medical management, endoscopic procedures and surgical options. Our goal is to tailor a treatment plan to an individual's needs and preferences. Learn more about this program by calling 212.305.4000. Come meet us at our patient awareness day, "COMMiT for your New Year's Resolution, on January 13, 2017!

Below are some recent articles on weight loss you may find of interest.

To good health,

Marc Bessler, MD

The Center for Metabolic and Weight Loss Surgery

Selfies Show Impact of Weight Loss Surgery

Amanda Kurtz, 29, a Philadelphia medical assistant, has been sharing photos on Instagram showing her progress since her weight loss surgery last May. Amanda had a vertical sleeve gastrectomy (VSG), a procedure that removes a large portion of the patient's stomach, reducing it to the size of a banana.

[Abraham Krikhely](#), MD, a weight-loss surgeon at [Columbia's Center for Metabolic and Weight Loss Surgery](#) tells *Self* magazine this is the most commonly performed weight loss surgery in the country and in his practice. He says, "It will not do the work for you, but it's going to help you help yourself." Read more here:

<http://www.self.com/story/teary-selfie-weight-loss-surgery>

Bariatric Surgery: The Solution to Obesity?

The New Yorker recently reported on the evolution of weight loss surgery, noting that diet and exercise alone "fail overwhelmingly often" and that surgery is a safe and affective treatment for obesity. The article features several patients who say why choosing surgery was the best decision they ever made. Marc Bessler, MD, Director of Columbia's Center for Metabolic and Weight Loss Surgery, also comments on our mysterious relationship to food and why dieting can be so difficult.

Read more here:

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/09/26/bariatric-surgery-the-solution-to-obesity>

Activity Trackers May Undermine Weight Loss Efforts

The New York Times recently reported that wearable activity monitors don't really help people lose weight, according to a new study reported in JAMA. Even more surprising is that we may shed more pounds without relying on these devices.

Read more here:

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/27/well/activity-trackers-may-undermine-weight-loss-efforts.html?_r=0

Obesity During Pregnancy May Increase Baby's Risk of Chronic Diseases Later On

A recent article in *Live Science* shows that obesity in mothers-to-be may produce infants with shorter telomeres—the information within our DNA that protects body cells from aging and deterioration.

The telomere loss in these newborns may increase the risk for chronic diseases in adulthood, the study authors said. Why? These individuals have cells that are roughly 17 years older, biologically, than others in their same age group.

Read more here:

<http://www.livescience.com/56513-obesity-newborns-telomeres-biological-age.html>

Regular Sleep/Wake Patterns May Boost Weight Loss after Bariatric Surgery

A new study of gastric bypass patients suggests that normal sleep patterns—sleeping at night and staying awake during the day—can help individuals maximize weight loss after surgery. This study was done on

mice in the lab, not on people. But it is the first one to explore how we might improve outcomes following gastric bypass surgery by correcting disruptions to the patient's sleep/wake cycles, known as "the circadian clock."

Read more here:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/11/161102080311.htm>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

"COMMiT For Your New Year's Resolution"

Friday, January, 13, 2017 11:00am - 2:00 PM

Location: NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center,
Riverview Terrace, 173 Fort Washington Avenue, first floor, New York, NY
10032

Join us for an exciting and educational program!

- Nutrition and mindful eating
- Medical weight management
- Endoscopic options
- Surgical options
- Endocrine issues in weight management
- Patient stories
- Meet the clinicians in small round-table discussions

Register at: www.ColumbiaSurgery.org/events

For more information, please call Jessica Mead at (212) 304-7817 or email jas2134@cumc.columbia.edu

Sponsored by COMMiT (Comprehensive Obesity and Metabolism Management and Treatment)

A full list of our patient awareness programs can be found here: <http://columbiasurgery.org/events/upcoming/5>

The Center for Metabolic and Weight Loss Surgery has offices in several convenient locations in the tri-state area. You can make an appointment

here: <http://columbiasurgery.org/weight-loss/our-locations>



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