

Andrew Averbach, MD, PA
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Catonsville MD 21228
Phone: 410-368-8725

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for your interest in the Surgical Weight Loss Program associated with St. Agnes Hospital. Enclosed you will find paperwork to complete and bring with you the day of your appointment, a checklist of things to be done prior to your appointment, and information about our program. Please review the packet in its entirety. Failure to complete the information and the requirements on the checklist will result in rescheduling of your appointment. Your appointment is scheduled with:

Physician: _____

Date: _____ **Appointment Time:** _____

Please arrive 15 minutes early to allow time to process your forms and paper work.

Kindly give us 24 hours notice if you are unable to keep this appointment. Failure to do so will result in a \$50 broken appointment charge that is not covered by your insurance and the appointment will not be rescheduled. You will receive a reminder call a few days before your scheduled appointment.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Prior to your appointment, contact your insurance company to find out if office visits and surgical treatment for morbid obesity is a covered benefit for your plan. If your initial office visit is not covered, you will be responsible for this fee. The codes the insurance company may ask for are 43770 for LapBand and 43644 for Gastric Bypass.

All insurance companies have requirements you must meet for coverage for surgery. Most plans require a 6 month supervised weight loss plan before they will consider authorizing the surgery. (CareFirst BC/BS, MAMSI, Optimum Choice, MDIPA, Coventry, Aetna, Cigna) If that is the case, then Patients must meet monthly in a structured weight loss program. The program must document each visit. This documentation is required as part of the review for the insurance authorization. We can assist you in this process if necessary.

Our Office staff will gladly assist you with any billing and insurance questions you may have.

BIARIATRIC SURGERY INFORMATION SESSIONS

We require that patients attend a free seminar on Bariatric Surgery prior to their appointment with the surgeon. To register for a session, call 1-866-690-9355.

MEDICAL RECORDS

You must obtain copies of your most recent medical records as well as lab reports, to bring to your appointment. Failure to bring these to your initial visit will result in rescheduling your

appointment. Please also provide a copy of any cardiac testing, sleep studies or other pertinent information.

The Surgical Weight Loss Program

Our Bariatric Program is multidisciplinary. In addition to our surgeons, our program consists of our Bariatric Program Coordinator, a Dietician, Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist, and bimonthly support groups.

Cathy Carr-Dadin, RN, CBN – Cathy is the Bariatric Surgery Program Coordinator at St. Agnes Hospital She is very knowledgeable about the process and will provide all the necessary education you need to feel comfortable about the surgery. Cathy also leads the Bariatric Support Group meetings and information sessions. You may reach Cathy at 410-368-2384.

Arlene Swantko, Registered Dietician – Arlene has many years of experience working with surgical weight loss. Continued follow-up with Arlene is an important part of your weight loss success. Information about Arlene's fees is attached. To schedule an appointment with Arlene, call 410-302-2187. Her fee is \$150 and is payable at the time of your appointment. *Please note, we feel Ms. Swantko is the best in her field of expertise and therefore, we do not allow any outside nutritionists to do your dietary teaching.*

Beatrice Flynn, MS, RN, CS-P – Bea is a registered nurse and mental health clinical specialist. She has over 25 years of experience with families and individuals coping with physical and/or emotional difficulties. She is a member of the American Nurse Association and a Certified Clinical Nurse Specialist. The fee for consultation is \$150 and follow up visits, if needed, are \$90. Payment is required at the time of service. She can provide you with forms to submit to your insurance company but she does not process insurance claims. All fees are payable at the time of your appointment. To schedule an appointment, call 410-719-9799.

If you are currently seeing a psychotherapist, psychiatrist, or if your insurance requires you to see another psychiatric professional, please provide them with the information in this packet so they can address the issues we feel are important. Most insurance companies will not authorize the surgery without receiving this report and the doctors cannot perform the surgery without this evaluation. *It is advisable that you schedule this appointment prior to your appointment with the doctor.*

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

The Surgical Weight Loss Support Group meets twice a month. The meetings are held at St. Agnes Hospital on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 6-7 p.m. The Gastric Bypass group meets the first Wednesday of the month and the LapBand group meets the third Wednesday of the month. It is highly recommended you attend one or more meetings prior to your surgery. You will learn a lot about surgery and the expectations of the program.

We look forward to meeting you and discussing if surgery is appropriate for you.

Sincerely,

Andrew Averbach, M.D., FACS and St. Agnes Hospital