

weighing

UPDATES FROM OUR BARIATRICS TEAM



CENTER FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT
HORIZON HEALTH



Fall 2023

Welcome to the Center for Weight Management!

We are excited about your interest in our bariatric surgery program and pursuing a “new and better you” for the future. This newsletter will provide you with important information about our program.

It includes details about our care team, exercise and nutrition tips, wellness articles, insurance information, support group offerings, and more. Feel free to contact us to learn more about our program!

Meet OUR TEAM!



YANIV COZACOV, MD

Bariatric & General Surgeon



FOUAD HACHEM, MD

Bariatric & General Surgeon



DALLAS NEWLIN
CMA, Bariatric Insurance Specialist



JEAN MCCONKEY
RN/Bariatric Coordinator



Get started in our program!

It's quick and easy!

Schedule a FREE consultation today.

Call (217) 466-4868

Inside

- Meet Dr. Cozacov.....2
- Team Spotlight.....3
- Seminars/Support Group....4
- Insurance Info.....5
- Exercise Corner.....7
- Mindful Eating.....9
- Nutrition Notes.....10

Follow us



Already started your bariatric journey? Join our Facebook group!
[Center for Weight Management of Horizon Health](#)

Meet Dr. Cozacov



In this issue, we talk with Dr. Yaniv Cozacov, general surgeon who specializes in bariatric surgery. Dr. Cozacov joined Horizon Health in 2018. He is honored for his work as a clinical research fellow in bariatric and minimally invasive surgery at the Cleveland Clinic–Florida.

Q: Why did you decide to become a bariatric surgeon?

A: Realizing that obesity is a morbid disease, and that surgery is the only effective treatment, made me want to take the "bull by the horns."

“I personally saw the effects obesity had on my family and extended family. I saw people struggle with a lot of shame and guilt.”

Q: What is a typical workweek for you?

A: Outside of seeing patients in the office several days a week, I perform a variety of surgeries, including bariatric surgery, laparoscopic hernia repair, bowel surgery, gallbladder removal, and hemorrhoid surgery. Others include treatment for gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)/heartburn, cyst and skin lesion removal, port and feeding tube placement, and breast procedures. I stay busy and love my patients.

Q: What do you love about your job?

A: It is not a job. It is a way of life; a real lifetime achievement. I love the dynamics and working with people, bringing positivity to my patients, and giving them a greater quality of life. I have empathy for those suffering from obesity. Through surgery, I found something that I am good at. I feel that I am really changing people's lives for the better. I love it!

Q: What do you love about your job?

A: It is not a job. It is a way of life; a real lifetime achievement. I love the dynamics and working with people, bringing positivity to my patients, and giving them a greater quality of life. I have empathy for those suffering from obesity. Through surgery, I found something that I am good at. I feel that I am really changing people's lives for the better. I love it!

Q: What is the most challenging part of your job?

A: We are doing wonderful things here. Our surgery department has the highest standards. Many people in our community and the surrounding areas are not aware of the wonderful work that is happening here.

“I want to get the word out to everyone about this wonderful facility and let them know what a hidden gem it is. Horizon Health has so much to offer to the community.”

Q: What do you like to do outside of work?

A: I enjoy traveling and exploring the world, the arts, and music concerts. I also like spending time with my family, cooking, drawing, and playing the guitar.

Q: Where do you see the Horizon Health Center for Weight Management in five years?

A: I see us as a landmark institution in central Illinois that is providing advanced multidisciplinary care for patients who are struggling with obesity. I see the volume of patients exploding. Over the past five years, we have seen a big increase in the number of patients seeking obesity care. I know we have a great need in our community and surrounding areas.

Team Spotlight



Jean McConkey, RN

Bariatric Program Coordinator

Q: What do you do at the Horizon Health Center for Weight Management?

A: I am a dedicated resource for patients as they work through their bariatric journey. I am the initial person they call to get started in the program. I get them going on their journey and provide them with education throughout the program. I follow patients five years post-operatively with guidance and support.

Q: What motivated you to become a nurse?

A: I helped care for my ill grandmother when I was a teenager. It was a great feeling to help her in her time of need. I decided this was something I wanted to do for others. I have been in healthcare for nearly 30 years, and a nurse for 23 years. Over the years I have been able to help many patients, which is a wonderful feeling.

Q: How did you get into the field of bariatrics and weight management?

A: Throughout my nursing career I have helped patients make lifestyle and dietary changes to live longer, healthier lives. It has been a rewarding experience, and the bariatric program offers a similar experience. It is rewarding to see patients enjoy things again, things they haven't experienced in years due to excess weight.

Q: What is it about your job that gets you out of bed in the morning?

A: The ability to help patients find a new love of life by losing excess weight.

Q: What have you learned from working with patients who struggle with their weight?

A: I empathize with patients. I have struggled with weight my entire life. I feel patients have guided our program as we have grown. Without feedback from them, we wouldn't be where we are.

“I’VE LEARNED THAT OUR PATIENTS CAN TEACH US JUST AS MUCH AS WE CAN TEACH THEM. IT IS A TEAM EFFORT.”

Q: What do you enjoy doing when you are not at work?

A: I enjoy spending time with family and friends. I am also a huge animal lover. I have five dogs that I could not live without. I live on a farm and enjoy horses tremendously. I love to take vacations, especially to the mountains or beaches.

Q: What is your favorite TV show or movie, and why?

A: I don't watch a lot of TV. But I do recall the first movie I ever saw in the theater was ET. I have always loved that movie. Elliott loved ET and would do anything to help him get home. I think loving one another is so important. The world needs more Elliotts.

Q: What's the best piece of advice you have ever received?

A: “You can do anything you put your mind to” has been my life motto. If we can keep that motto in the back of our mind, we will ultimately reach our goals.



Weight Loss Resources

Online seminar

Scan the QR code to request the pre-recorded weight loss seminar.



Attend a seminar from the comfort of your home or wherever you choose with our convenient online seminars.



Podcasts

Listen to our expert surgeons in their bariatric surgery podcasts with Valley Health Check. Our podcasts are packed full of information!



Patient Stories

People just like you have successfully started and finished our program! Read Jessica's story and learn about her new quality of life thanks to Horizon Health and the Bariatric Center for Weight Management Team!

Bariatric Support Group

Our FREE support group is for current or previous patients of our bariatric program. Participants share experiences and motivate each other toward a healthier lifestyle. Spouses, family members, and friends are welcome to attend.

Typically one Monday per month
5:30–6:30 pm, Conference Room A
(Horizon Health main campus)
Call (217) 466-4868



Support Group Calendar

October 23—Exercise fundamentals

November 20—Addiction transfer: Trading food for other addictions

October 23—Exercise fundamentals

December 18—Managing emotional eating & ways to slow down for the holiday

Insurance Insider

Changing insurance carriers



Dallas Newlin
CMA, Bariatric
Insurance Specialist



Illinois is fortunate to be one of 23 states that requires health plans to cover weight loss surgery. However, when it comes to weight loss surgery, insurance coverage can be one of the most complex pieces of the puzzle. Because insurance companies have different requirements (steps and provider visits) to obtain surgical approval, our team and patients work closely with our insurance specialist, Dallas Newlin, to gain an understanding of their individual insurance requirements. These individual requirements are like a roadmap to insurance approval, which at times can take up to six months.

But what happens if your insurance provider changes? Perhaps you got a new job and had to choose a new private insurance provider. Or maybe you recently signed on with Medicare or Medicaid. Either way, changing insurance providers means the roadmap to your surgery destination may change. As a person interested in bariatric surgery, it is important to do some research prior to choosing a new insurance carrier, as well as update us on any changes. It is important that we are notified if your plan changes, so that we have you completing the right steps to surgery (and not prolonging your journey).

It's important to understand that the preoperative requirements and costs within your current insurance policy may not be the same as your new insurance policy. If you have a new insurance policy, then do not assume everything will be the same as your previous insurance. Dallas, our insurance specialist, is here to support you through any of your insurance questions or concerns. Feel free to call her any time for assistance at 217-466-4571.



Insurance Insider

Changing insurance carriers

Confirm the new policy covers weight loss surgery.

Speak with your human resources representative or the insurance customer service representative. They can direct you to the information that details the coverage provided, including which types of surgery are covered, as well as the preoperative requirements for obtaining an approval for bariatric surgery. Ask for a copy of their “bariatric” or “weight loss” surgery policy. Dallas, our insurance specialist, can also help you navigate these details by calling 217-466-4293.

Check to see if your surgeon is “in network.”

Hospitals and healthcare providers contract with different health plans to help save patients money. For example, when a doctor joins a particular network, they agree to accept a contracted amount for their services. By using a doctor or healthcare provider who is “in network,” you can ensure that you will get the services you need for the best price. If a patient utilizes an “out of network” provider, their insurance company may cover some of the cost, but the patient is responsible for the remainder of the charges. When switching insurance companies, contact the customer service number to learn which providers are considered “in network.”

Understand the costs.

Insurance companies can be very complex when it comes to how they cover certain costs. Most insurance companies will have a deductible that you must pay prior to them picking up the remainder of the costs of the service. Deductibles can vary significantly between different insurance plans, even by those offered within the same company. Be sure your deductible is reasonable based on the level of care you are seeking prior to switching insurance companies. Lastly, sometimes insurance companies will impose a cap on payment. This means a specific procedure may cost you more than you expect. For example, let’s say a surgery costs \$10,000. When an insurance company imposes a “cap,” it can restrict its payment to a cap or maximum payment of only \$5,000 for that particular surgery.

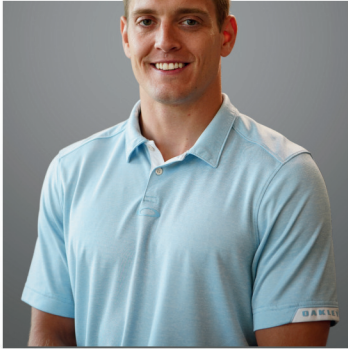
Understand the insurance company requirements for bariatric surgery.

Each insurance company has different requirements a patient must complete prior to having weight loss surgery. These requirements may include specifics pertaining to age, BMI, comorbid conditions, documented weight history, diet history, as well as a “medically supervised nutrition and physical activity” requirement. Typically, one of the most confusing aspects of switching insurance is the “medically supervised nutrition and physical activity” requirement. Many patients are discouraged when they discover their new insurance requires six months of visits, whereas their previous insurance company only required three. Our insurance specialist, Dallas, is here to help you understand any changes with requirements. So, please let us know if you have, or are thinking of, a change to your insurance plan(s).



Exercise Corner

Starting (and sticking to) an exercise program



Preston Skinner
Exercise Physiologist

With the warmer weather, you may be motivated to start a new exercise regime. We all know exercise is good for us. It strengthens our bones and muscles, reduces the risk of heart disease, and helps maintain weight loss. But how can you start an exercise program and stick to it? Let's examine a few quick tips to get you moving!

Talk to Your Doctor About Exercise

Speaking with your doctor before you start an exercise program can ensure your safety based on your current health status. Usually, light activity, such as walking, is safe for most people. But health experts suggest speaking to your doctor before starting an exercise program if you have heart disease, difficulty breathing, leg pain, diabetes, or kidney disease. Your doctor can also help you explore activities that are right for you as you begin your exercise journey.

Choose Activities You Enjoy

You are your own person! Just because someone else loves an activity, such as biking or cross fit, doesn't mean you have to love it too. There are endless physical activities to choose from. If you are beginning an exercise program, choose an activity you truly enjoy. Participating in an activity that makes you happy will help boost your confidence and increase the likelihood of sticking with your exercise program. The other thing to remember is that exercise doesn't have to occur in a gym. Walking, chair exercises, and dancing are all great exercises that don't involve a gym.

How Much Exercise Do You Need?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults get 150 minutes of moderate physical activity, as well as two days of muscle strengthening activity, each week. For many people, this recommendation can be discouraging, especially if it's been a while since regular exercise was a part of their daily routine. Feeling discouraged can lead us to think that if we can't complete the recommended amount of exercise, why bother exercising at all? Well, it's time to throw away the "all or nothing" attitude and start an exercise program that you feel comfortable doing. Perhaps you want to begin by walking around the dining room table or walking to the mailbox. If walking is challenging, maybe chair exercises are for you. Even if you can only do a few minutes of exercise at a time, if you stick with it, eventually you will build up your endurance and be able to go for longer periods of time. Research even shows that doing small bursts of physical activity has the same health benefits as one long session. So, if you prefer to do 3-10 minute exercise sessions instead of one 30-minute session, go for it! In a nutshell, it's best to do some physical activity instead of none at all.

Every-Day Activities Count As Exercise

Did you know that incorporating small bits of activity into your day can increase your physical fitness? Simple things like housecleaning, yardwork, parking further away from the store, or taking the stairs instead of the elevator all count as activity. Think about your daily schedule. What small activities can you add to your day to increase the amount of activity you get?

Schedule An Exercise Appointment on Your Calendar

More and more schedules are dictating our daily life. Pick up the kids at 3 pm, go to the dentist at 9 am, attend a business meeting at 1 pm, the list could go on forever. By scheduling physical activity into your day, you are more likely to have the time to plan for it and complete it. Is the morning hour before work the only time you can exercise? Then scheduling it for this time would increase the likelihood of doing the activity. Once exercise is on your calendar, you can plan the appropriate time to wake up, and/or lay out your exercise clothes!

Drink Plenty of Fluid

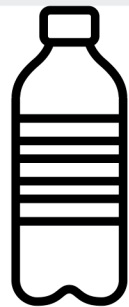
Drinking fluids is important to prevent dehydration. When our bodies are dehydrated, we don't feel well and usually have little desire for exercise. If you have already had weight loss surgery, sipping fluids regularly during exercise and throughout the day is essential. Proper hydration helps your body recover from your exercise session and motivates you to continue! If you are preparing for weight loss surgery, practice makes perfect! Sip fluids constantly throughout the day, except while eating meals. Dehydration is the most common reason weight loss surgery patients are readmitted to the hospital, so staying hydrated can also keep you out of the hospital!

Listen to Your Body!

We have all heard the saying "No Pain, No Gain." This saying could not be further from the truth. Pain is not a way to measure the success of a workout. It is a warning sign that you may be overdoing it. Listen to your body. If you are feeling excessive pain, fatigue, or exhaustion take some time to rest; you will feel more energized to continue again the next day.

Reward Yourself!

If you are doing something good for yourself, do not hesitate to reward yourself for it! Non-food rewards are the best rewards when trying to lose or maintain weight. Taking a hot bath, buying a new book, or listening to nature sounds can all be rewards. Think about how you want to reward yourself for a job well done!



Upcoming Walks/Runs

Registration for all runs is available at runningintheusa.com

- **October 21**–Shake Your Trail Feather Trail Run, Charleston, IL
- **November 11**–Indiana Fall Classic at Hawthorn Park, Terre Haute, IN
- **November 23**–Terre Haute Turkey Trot, downtown Terre Haute, IN
- **November 23**–Bare Bones Turkey Trot, Mattoon, IL
- **December 2**–Christmas in the Park, Deming Park, Terre Haute, IN



Be Mindful

Mindless vs. Mindful Eating



Eva Kirchner, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist



Have you ever sat down in front of the TV with a bag of potato chips, and before you realized it, the entire bag was gone? You didn't mean to eat the entire bag, but your attention was on the television show and not your eating. The result was eating more than you had planned.

You are not alone. People engage in mindless eating for many reasons, including emotions, depression, distraction, or even guilt. Unfortunately, this eating behavior can result in weight gain. If you find yourself mindlessly eating on a regular basis, perhaps giving “mindful eating” a try would benefit you!

Mindful eating is the practice of maintaining full awareness while you eat; focusing totally on your thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations while you experience the act of eating. Research has shown that mindful eating can lead to improved feelings of wellbeing, more pleasure from the act of eating, and improved body satisfaction. Research also demonstrates that choosing to eat mindfully can help you lose weight and change your eating behaviors.

If you are interested in becoming more mindful when you eat, there are a few simple behaviors to get started:

Make eating your primary focus. Turn off the television, your computer, or cell phone and focus fully on the act of eating.

Take time to eat. Avoid hurrying through the meal. Take your time and notice the food you are consuming. Focus on how the food feels in your mouth, how the food tastes and how the food makes you feel.

Chew your food. Chewing your food thoroughly is another tool that allows you to focus on your food more closely. Notice how the food feels in your mouth. Are you enjoying the food?

Focus on why you are eating. Are you physically hungry or are you eating to simply quell your emotions? Understanding why you eat can help you develop behavior changes that lead to healthier, more purposeful eating.

Mindful eating is another tool you can add to your toolbox to help you change your eating behaviors. It takes time and regular practice for mindful eating to feel natural. However, the benefits of this practice can be truly life changing.



Nutrition Notes

Why Protein?

Eat your protein first! It seems to be the cardinal rule of weight loss surgery. But what is protein and why do we need it?



Protein, carbohydrate and fat are what we call “macronutrients.” These three macronutrients are found in food and contain the components our body needs to thrive. Protein is an essential micronutrient because it is needed for building and maintaining important structures within the body. Protein is made up of approximately 20 different amino acids. These amino acids are often referred to as the building blocks of protein. Your body can make some amino acids, but there are nine that cannot be manufactured by the body and must be obtained from food. Amino acids link together in the body to form protein; then the body uses that protein to make important structures like muscle, bone, enzymes, and hormones.

After weight loss surgery, you are strongly encouraged to consume adequate amounts of protein for a couple of reasons:

To assist with healing. Surgery puts a lot of stress on the body and consuming adequate protein assists with that healing.

To preserve lean body mass. When we lose weight, we lose both fat and the protein from our muscles. By consuming the recommended amount of protein each day, the loss of muscle is minimized allowing the body to burn more calories and improve weight loss.

Still Have Questions About Protein?

Understanding the ins and outs of protein can be confusing. Our registered dietitian Eva Kirchner can help you understand everything you need to know about protein. Our practice also sells Unjury products through the Paris Clinic Pharmacy, which are medical-quality protein products that taste great. Unjury comes in unflavored, sweet, and savory flavors to help add variety to the time you spend on the liquid diet.

High-Protein Recipes

Cinnamon Caramel Coffee

1 packet or 1 scoop UNJURY® Unflavored
1 cup brewed coffee (regular or decaf)
4 teaspoons sugar-free caramel syrup
1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

- Place hot coffee into a large mug and allow to cool to 140° F.
- Mix in UNJURY.
- Add in caramel syrup and cinnamon and stir until dissolved.

Protein Pancakes

1 packet or 1 scoop UNJURY® Vanilla
1 small banana
1 large egg
1 large egg white



- In a medium-size bowl, whisk all ingredients together until well-blended and no clumps are visible.
- Spray a skillet or griddle top with cooking spray and put on medium heat.
- Pour approximately 1/3 of the batter onto the skillet or griddle top and allow the batter to cook until the edges are golden brown.
- Flip the pancake and allow that side to cook until evenly golden brown on whole pancake. Repeat with the rest of the mixture until you have three pancakes.

Check out more high-protein recipes at: <https://unjury.com/resources/recipes>

NEW! The Paris Clinic Pharmacy currently offers Unjury for purchase. For more information, call Jean McConkey at 217-466-4868. We will soon be offering LiquaCel protein.