Labs: Why we do them
What the results mean

Our program asks that patients have lab tests prior to their 2 month follow up, their 12 month follow up and then yearly, forever. But why is it so important to do them and then to have them reviewed by the bariatric professional?

The requirement of proper nutritional surveillance is extremely important following bariatric surgery. Initially patients are on a very low calorie diet, which means that what they do eat must count and they must take supplements to ensure adequate intake of nutrients. This may mean supplementing with protein drinks as well. Down the road, vitamin supplements are still important, as is eating properly. To ensure that patients are getting the adequate nutrition and aren’t either suffering from deficiencies or at risk of deficiencies, routine lab tests are essential. We’ll help explain the why….

Support Group Meetings

Bellevue  Wed  2-17-16  6:30–8:15
Central    Wed  2-10-16  6:15–8:15
Everett    Wed  2-24-16  6:00–8:00
Fed. Way   Wed  2-3-16   6:30–8:00
Olympia    Wed  2-10-16  6:30–8:00
Silverdale Thurs 2-18-16  6:00–7:30
Tacoma     Tues 2-23-16  6:00–8:00

Back on Track Support Group
Groups have been cancelled until further notice.

Guest Speakers

February: Julie @ Bellevue & Seattle
March: Julius @ Bellevue & Olympia

Upcoming Topics

March: Eating Disorders
April: New Product Finds

Group Health Bariatric Web Page

*On the GHC.org Web Site *

http://www.ghc.org/bariatric-patients/

Copy and paste this URL to your favorites for easy access.

Monthly newsletter posted the 1st of each month (if the 1st is a weekend/holiday, it will be posted the next business day). About 2 years of past newsletter issues are also available.
Lab: What & Why

CBC (Complete Blood Count):
This test can be used to evaluate your overall health status and is often a part of a routine physical exam and is used to evaluate symptoms such as weakness, fatigue or fever. It can diagnosis infection, anemia, and the effectiveness of treatments.

CMP (Comprehensive Metabolic Panel):
Used to evaluate organ function, such as liver and kidney and to evaluate diabetes, hypertension and the effectiveness of treatments. A single abnormality may signal something different than if several tests were abnormal.

Pre-albumin:
Pre-albumin is one of the major plasma proteins. It is a sensitive marker of nutritional status. A low pre-albumin may indicate inadequate protein intake. It may also indicate a zinc deficiency.

Iron, Ferritin, TIBC:
This test is used to evaluate for anemia, nutritional status and liver disease.

Thiamin:
This is vitamin B1. It helps to convert carbohydrates into energy for the body, brain and nervous system. Low thiamin can result in fatigue, weakness, psychosis, and nerve damage. The damage from low thiamin can be permanent if not treated promptly. Low thiamin can result from prolonged episodes of vomiting.

Cholesterol:
This test is used to evaluate for hyperlipidemias and the risk of coronary heart disease. Cholesterol is required for the production of steroids, sex hormones, bile acids and cellular membranes, however it’s important to keep your cholesterol within normal range to prevent coronary artery disease.

Vitamin D:
Vitamin D enhances the intestinal absorption of calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphates and zinc. Very few foods contain vitamin D. We get our vitamin from foods with added vitamin D and sunshine. Low vitamin D is very common in our neck of the woods. Low vitamin D is treated with supplementation. It’s important to note that since vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin, it is possible to experience symptoms from excessive vitamin D.

Vitamin B12:
Vitamin B12 plays a key role in normal brain and nervous system function. This nutrient requires intrinsic factor for absorption. Intrinsic factor is produced in stomach and significantly reduces following RNY gastric bypass, which is why it’s important to take B12 supplements lifelong. B12 deficiencies can result in anemia as well as brain and nervous system damage that can be irreversible. This is a water-soluble vitamin, so excess in the body are not toxic.

PTH:
Parathyroid function testing is used to help diagnosis calcium deficiencies. Parathyroid hormone helps to keep the blood calcium within normal range. A high PTH indicates that it’s working overtime to do that, because the body is not absorbing adequate amounts of calcium. Because calcium carbonate requires stomach acid for absorption, it’s important to take a daily Calcium Citrate with vitamin D.

Folate:
Also a B vitamin, which is necessary for normal function of red and white blood cells. Testing of folate helps to evaluate nutritional status and anemia.

Copper:
Copper is an important trace mineral for enzyme involvement in the formation of red blood cells and connective tissue proteins. Cooper evaluates protein stores and nutritional status.

Zinc:
Zinc is an essential element that helps to evaluate for iron deficiencies.

HgbA1c:
Evaluates average levels of blood sugar over a three month period.
Program Updates

Group Visits:
We are going to begin doing group follow up visits. This will be a 2 hour follow up appointment in a group of 10-15 others who are all at the same post op point (the first group will be 6 months out from surgery). We see the value of the group as a longer amount of time with the Bariatric PA, as well as engaging with other patients who are at the same point. We find that the issues and questions at any given post op time frame are essentially the same. Co-payments will still be collected. Vitals and weight will still be done (in private) and each patient will have a very brief physical exam by the PA (also in private of course). These will take place during the first hour, at which time I (Julie) will be facilitating the group. The second hour will be with the PA. We’re very excited to be able to offer this as an option to the routine follow up appointments. These are an alternative to the individual follow ups and are optional. Some patients are not going to like this idea and some (those having significant issues) won’t be appropriate for this setting. Those that are interested, please email me at: bariatricpatients@ghc.org

Back on Track:
We will be offering a new Back on Track type support group. This will actually be an 8 week workshop, meeting once a week for about 2 hours, facilitated by me (Julie). The first workshop will be for those that are at least 2 years out from surgery and will be held at our Seattle Capitol Hill Group Health on a weekday, during the day. The exact day and time is yet to be determined. The workshop will require a $40 fee for materials. Those that are interested in participating or further information, please email me at: bariatricpatients@ghc.org
The first workshop will hopefully begin in mid-March.

We Need Your Feedback

Nutrition Counseling:
We’ve received some comments of the nutrition requirement and the dietitian appointments. We’d like to get your comments and feedback on this. Nutrition counseling is a program requirement, however we want to make sure that you are getting your needs met with this requirement. If you have any comments or feedback, good or bad, email: bariatricpatients@ghc.org

Pre-Op Education:
It’s been 6 months now since we converted our 6 hour pre-op class, held at the Bellevue Group Health, to the online pre-op education power point. We’d like to get your feedback about this. Those of you that did not attend the class won’t really have anything to compare the online education version to, however you can let us know what value you have gained from the power point and if you would prefer to attend an in-person, interactive class with the bariatric team, rather than the online version, or maybe have the option of which you’d like to do.
Those that did attend the class rather than viewing the online pre-op education power point, we’d like to hear from you as well. This will help us to evaluate the needs of our patients and determine how the change is going and if we need to make any changes.

Follow Up Labs past 5 Years Post Op

After your 5 year follow up with the bariatric team, we transfer your yearly follow up back to your primary care provider. Your doctor can look back in your chart to see what labs we have been ordering yearly. These is also a list in your notebook/booklet and also in our online notebook: http://www.ghc.org/bariatric-patients/ Notebook can be found in the upper right hand corner of this web page.
Announcements

- The Bariatric Step’s to a Healthier Future is available online. As we update the booklet, we will post the most recent version on the http://www.ghc.org/bariatric-patients/ web page. Most recent updates: 2-1-16.

- Interested in a Walking Group:

Olympia Support Group has a walking group that will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Capital Mall (Starbucks entrance) at 6:00pm. The group walks laps around the mall, for the winter months.

The contacts are Carrie Hoesing (eyeshewawa@yahoo.com / 360-402-5556) and Charolotte McLaughlin (mackie_doodle_dandy@yahoo.com / 360-451-3443). Join the fun!!

- Good January Support Group Attendance:

All of our support groups had a better than usual attendance in January!! We encourage patients to make support group attendance a monthly routine. Studies show that those that attend have better long term success.

- Facebook:

Group Health bariatric Facebook page, Second Chancers link: https://www.facebook.com/groups/285256815001402/

- Needs Your Help:

Food product finds is an upcoming newsletter topic. If you have any great finds, please email those to: bariatricpatients@ghc.org

Your Questions Answered

Why is it taking so long for someone to call with my consult appointment?

Adding a new surgeon to our surgeon group (he will make 7 in our General Surgery group), is a bit complicated and takes time to adjust all of their schedules to incorporate another surgeon to take call and have time in the clinic and operating room. Please be assured that at this time, no one is being scheduled for consults. Consults will be scheduled in the order that the patients were added to the list, once the schedule is available.

Why can't I take a gummy vitamin?

Gummy vitamins do not contain Thiamin. Thiamin is vitamin B1 and is vital to health. The post bariatric diet may not include enough vitamins, which is why multiple vitamins, B12 and calcium citrate are required to be taken daily to avoid the risk of deficiencies.

I heard that part of the reason for the long waits for surgery is that Overlake is not giving us operating room time?

Not true. Additional operating room time is a given with the addition of a new surgeon adding our group. The long waits are simply that we have more patients than we can accommodate with just one surgeon. Hence the hiring of a new surgeon.

Why do we need a sleep study before surgery?

About 80% of those tested for sleep apnea, test positive. Untreated sleep apnea increases the surgical risk. For your safety, this is a risk that the anesthesiologist will not take.

Does GERD improve with surgery?

Yes. If you continue to experience GERD, please let us know.

Why do some patients have to go to Tacoma for the psych assessment?

Patients with a history of depression or other mental health issues, eating disorders or history of PTSD, or abuse are done by our bariatric psychologist. Others are done by the medical social worker at your primary care clinic.
Recipe of the Month

Mini-Turkey Vegetable Meatloaves

1 small onion
1/4 cup plus 3 tablespoons ketchup
1 1/4 lb. lean ground turkey
3 cups bagged broccoli coleslaw, chopped
1/2 cup fat-free liquid egg substitute
1/2 cup oats
2 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 350°. Line 9 of a 12 cup muffin tin sprayed with nonstick cooking spray.
Grate onion into a large bowl. Add 1/4 cup ketchup and all other ingredients. Thoroughly mix.
Evenly distribute mixture among the muffin cups and top each with 1 tsp. ketchup.
Bake until firm and lightly browned around the edges, about 30-35 minutes.
Serves: 9, Calories: 142, Protein: 14 grams

Cheesy Beef Turnip Fries

1 1/2 lb. turnips (about 2 medium turnips)
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
4 oz. raw lean ground beef
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
2 slices fat-free cheddar cheese
1 wedge The Laughing Cow Creamy Swiss cheese

Preheat oven to 425°. Spray 2 baking sheets with nonstick cooking spray.
Cut turnips into French-fry shaped spears. Spread on baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes, flip and cook another 15 minutes.

In skillet over med-high heat, cook onion and beef until both are cooked through. Add salt and pepper. Transfer to medium bowl and add cheeses (broken into small pieces). Stir until melted. Top fries with mixture and serve hot.
Serves: 2, Calories: 229, Protein: 20.5 grams

Upcoming Newsletter Topics

We always try to make the topic of our monthly newsletters something that we think is useful and important to review or a topic that our patients have been requesting.

Next month’s topic is Food Finds. Have you found a food or fluid product that you are very pleased with? We’d love to share it. You can send your food finds to bariatricpatients@ghc.org. Please include where you found it, to make it easier for others to enjoy the product.

Are there any topics you’d like us to review during 2016? I have a few months without assigned topics. This is your chance to make a request. Please email to: bariatricpatients@ghc.org.

RNY vs Vertical Sleeve

The two procedures that we are doing are the RNY gastric bypass and the vertical sleeve procedure. If you are pre-op and trying to decide what is best for you, please do your research. Read the notebook, view the online power point presentation, attend support groups and do research online. With all of this you will come to your pre-op consult with some knowledge of procedure and some pros and cons to discuss. The surgeon will let you know which procedure he feels might be best in your particular circumstances and why. If you are a diabetic, he may suggest the RNY gastric bypass as it has been shown to have better improvement in diabetes.

How to Contact the Bariatric Clinic

Bariatric Nurse: 425-502-3454
Routine Appointments: 425-502-3450
Bariatric Team Email: bariatricpatients@ghc.org
Patient Secure Messaging: Through My Group Health
Consulting Nurse: 1-800-297-6877

Please email any medical concerns, pre or post op questions through My Group Health or call the bariatric nurse. Call the Consulting Nurse line if after 4:30 and weekends, with any post op concerns.