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Healthy Habits: Balloon Weight Loss Surgery

Americans spend almost 60 billion dollars annually in pursuit of weight loss with gastric bypass surgery being the most common type of weight-loss surgery; an option that isn't for everyone. Like any major procedure, gastric bypass has significant health risks and side effects. In addition, to be a candidate for the procedure, one must have a BMI (body mass index) of 40 or higher. The fact is, a huge percentage of the population are only between 15 to 50 pounds overweight without any other options besides diet and exercise. **Dr. Stanley Poulos**, a San Francisco board certified plastic surgeon is an early adaptor of the non-surgical balloon weight loss method approved by the FDA in 2016. Following the two-part program, patients lost an average 3.1x the weight compared with diet & exercise alone.

Dr. Poulos stresses that, "there is a direct correlation between those patients who stay connected to their program and their weight loss success." Dr. Poulos is highly experienced in body contour plastic surgery which is sometimes required after major weight loss. Sometimes, due to skin laxity after weight loss, procedures such as thigh lift, breast lift, liposuction or "tummy tuck" are desired by patients.

Who is an ideal candidate for the balloon weight loss method?

It is appropriate for patients with a BMI of 30 to 40 that have not had previous weight loss surgery. Patients diagnosed with bulimia, binge eating, compulsive overeating, high liquid calorie intake habits or similar eating related psychological disorders are not good candidates.

How does the balloon method work?

This non-surgical outpatient procedure begins with a diagnostic endoscopy to ensure that there are no contraindications and that it is safe to perform. Once the patient is mildly sedated and comfortable, the procedure can begin. The deflated gastric balloon is inserted through the esophagus and into the stomach. A syringe is then used to fill the balloon with a sterile saline solution. Once the weight loss balloon has been filled with saline, it expands to approximately the size of a grapefruit. The entire procedure takes about 20 minutes. Patients can usually return home after the placement or removal procedures within 30 minutes. Over the last 20 years this procedure has helped over 277,000 people. The gastric balloon encourages portion control while patients make healthy changes to diet and lifestyle.

How long does the balloon stay in place?

The balloon remains in the stomach for the first six months after the procedure. With the stomach balloon and Dr. Poulos' support team, patients usually see the most drastic results in the first six months. It is very important to use this time to develop healthy habits that will continue for not only the 12-month weight loss program, but for the rest of one's life.

What to expect after the balloon placement.

Over the first 14 days after placement, patients may experience nausea or vomiting. Dr. Poulos recommends a liquid diet for his patients during the first week to help manage these symptoms. Also prescribed are effective anti-nausea drugs to help the patient through the initial stage.

How is the balloon removed?

Once the stomach balloon has been in place for six months the balloon is removed. The simple and non-surgical procedure is very similar to the placement process. Once the gastric balloon has been removed, it is very important to continue working closely with Dr. Poulos' team and coaches to follow the personal diet and

exercise plan provided. This will help to keep you in a positive and healthy mindset while achieving your weight loss goals.

Additional benefits of the balloon weight loss method.

- ü It's been shown that the average person loses 3x more weight with this procedure than with diet and exercise alone. Here are some of the reasons why:
- ü Diets can leave you feeling hungry or dissatisfied. This procedure helps by taking up room in the stomach and encouraging portion control.
- ü When you're overweight, exercise can be challenging and uncomfortable. With The Balloon Weight Loss Method aiding your weight loss, physical activity can be more comfortable.
- ü There are no incisions, stitches, or scars.
- ü Unlike gastric bypass surgery, this procedure is not solely for the morbidly obese.
- ü The procedure takes 20 minutes and most patients return home the same day.
- ü The balloon is only placed temporarily.
- ü The procedure is intended to work with a fitness and nutrition regimen for optimal results.

Cost: The general cost for the procedure is \$8,000 to \$10,000 nationwide and can be used with patients 22 and older who fit all of the medical criteria.

About Dr. Stanley Poulos

Dr. Poulos specializes in cosmetic breast surgery and body contouring procedures. He helped pioneer the quick lift facial rejuvenation surgery in California and is recognized as one of the leading plastic surgeons in Marin County and the entire San Francisco Bay area. Dr. Poulos and Plastic Surgery Specialists have extensive experience in body contour procedures. A graduate of the University of Texas Medical School, Dr. Poulos completed his internship and residency at UC San Francisco. He completed a plastic surgery fellowship at St. Francis Hospital in San Francisco and is certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. www.psspecialists.com

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