

band of gold

new tool tunes in weight loss success

by elise sims

You've tried to lose weight again and again through diet and exercise without success. If you are considerably overweight and need some additional help turning your frustration into victory, there is a new procedure available through Community Hospital in Munster that can help you end obesity, and ultimately change your life.

Lap-Band® AP Adjustable Gastric Banding System is the latest FDA-approved technology that helps you gradually lose and control your weight by reducing the amount of food your stomach is able to hold at one time. It's a safe, minimally invasive laparoscopic procedure that can be performed on an outpatient basis with small incisions, virtually no bleeding and quick recovery time.

"Some people are depressed from not being able to lose weight, even after three to six months of supervised weight loss through medications and dieting," says Paul Stanish, M.D., FACS, general surgeon on staff at Community Hospital in Munster and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart. "But, after the Lap-Band® procedure and coaching, they see food and their health in a whole new light. When our patients say, 'I no longer have diabetes. I no longer have high blood pressure. I used to be on

10 medications. You've changed my life,' you know this procedure has significant impact, and it's very rewarding."

how it works

An adjustable gastric band, also known as a Lap-Band, is an inflatable silicone device that is positioned around the topmost portion of the stomach during a laparoscopic outpatient procedure to treat obesity. The band creates a smaller stomach opening and pouch, which limits the amount of food that can be consumed at one time and increases the time it takes for the stomach to empty.

"We provide coaching on eating habits and exercise, and patients who take our advice and use the band correctly, do very, very well," Stanish says.

During the procedure, which takes a little more than an hour, the Lap-Band and connecting port are positioned through five, small incisions in the abdomen. First, the inflatable Lap-Band is placed at the top of the stomach by the surgeon using special long instruments and four small incisions. Then, the filling port is placed in the upper left quadrant of the belly through a larger, 2-inch incision. Most patients go home a few hours after the procedure, but those with sleep apnea are generally kept overnight for observation.

After a six-week recovery period when swelling subsides, a saline solution is introduced through the port, which inflates the Lap-Band pocket liner and tightens or adjusts the opening at the top of the stomach. There is an average of four such adjustments per year.



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Lap-Band® is a new device that helps patients gradually lose and control weight by reducing the amount of food the stomach is able to hold at one time, says Paul Stanish, M.D., FACS, general surgeon on staff at Community Hospital in Munster and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart. After Lap-Band® and coaching, patients see food and their health in a whole new light.



“Our experience has been that, in about one year, we’ve seen about 60 percent excess weight loss in our patients. So if the person needs to lose 100 pounds, on average with a band they are likely to lose 60 pounds,” Stanish says. “Those who adhere to the program guidelines will do even better.”

To determine if patients need an adjustment, a series of questions are answered during a follow-up visit:

- How much are you eating? (should be less than one cup per meal)
- How long are you staying full? (should be at least four hours)
- How hungry are you? (there should not be an urgency to eat)

So if the patient comes in and is eating more than 1 cup, not staying full for very long and is still hungry all the time, then it’s time to do an adjustment, he says.

Or, if a patient comes in and says he or she can’t swallow any solid food or is not sleeping at night because of acid reflux, then we know the band is too tight and we need to take a bit of the saline out.

candidates include ...

Not everyone is a candidate for the device, according to Stanish, who follows the National Institutes of Health guidelines when considering a potential patient for this type of weight-loss surgery. The guidelines call for a body mass index (BMI) greater than 40 or a BMI of 35 and higher with other existing conditions, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, joint conditions and/or reflux disease.

As with any other surgical procedure, complications such as bleeding or infection can occur. Several months after placement, if the band should move out of position—either higher or lower on the stomach—there could be difficulty in eating and the band would need to be surgically repositioned. While it is intended to be a long-term treatment, the Lap-Band and its connecting port can be removed at any time. **v&v**

The inflatable Lap-Band is placed at the top of the stomach by the surgeon and the filling port is placed in the upper left quadrant of the belly. After about six weeks, a saline solution is introduced through the port, which inflates the Lap-Band pocket liner and tightens or adjusts the opening at the top of the stomach.

learn more

To find a physician who performs the Lap-Band procedure at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System, call **219-836-3477** or toll-free, **866-836-3477**.

