

# News Release

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## **ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness to offer May surgical weight loss seminars and support groups**

The Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness at AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center (ARMC) will offer free seminars about weight loss surgery, including laparoscopic gastric bypass and laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding Friday, May 2 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, May 10 at 10 a.m.

ARMC will offer free support groups for those who have had weight loss surgery. May support groups at the AtlantiCare Life Center include:

- Gastric bypass surgery support group, for those considering gastric bypass surgery and those who have had the surgery in the last two years, Monday, May 5 at 6 p.m. (the first Monday of every month).
- Laparoscopic banding surgery support group, for anyone considering or who has had laparoscopic banding surgery, Wednesday, May 14 at 6:30 p.m. (the second Wednesday of every month).
- Gastric bypass graduates support group, for those who had gastric bypass surgery two or more years ago, Monday, May 19 at 6:30 p.m. (the third Monday of every month).

The Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness at ARMC is an American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence (BSCOE). To register for the next informational seminar, support group or to learn more about ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness, please call the AtlantiCare Access Center at 1-888-569-1000.

Morbidly obese patients are those who are more than 100 pounds over their ideal body weight or who have a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or greater, or 35 or greater with illnesses associated with being morbidly obese, including hypertension, Type II Diabetes, high cholesterol and/or high lipid levels, obstructive sleep apnea, gastroesophageal reflux disease, stress, urinary incontinence, premature arthritic changes and other illnesses. The surgeries are part of a multidisciplinary approach to the management of obesity at ARMC.

Gastric bypass surgery divides the stomach into a small upper portion from the larger lower portion so that only the small upper portion, which is reduced to be about the size of a medium-sized egg, receives the food. This promotes a significant decrease in food intake and creates a longer feeling of fullness after meals. The operation also bypasses a portion of the small intestines to reduce the

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*ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss May Seminars and Support Groups/ Add One*

calories the body absorbs and produces a feeling of satisfaction from eating a small amount. The laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding procedure, or “lap-band,” is the placement of a silicone band around the upper portion of the stomach. This restricts the amount of food the patient can consume and creates a longer feeling of fullness after meals. This procedure does not involve cutting or stapling of the stomach, and is currently the only adjustable and reversible surgical weight loss option. ARMC is the only hospital in the region that performs these procedures laparoscopically or through several small incisions. Benefits of the laparoscopic method generally include reduced recovery time and reduced post-surgical pain.

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AtlantiCare is a regional healthcare organization based in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey, whose more than 4,580 employees serve the healthcare needs of the community at more than 60 locations. It includes AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center (ARMC), the AtlantiCare Foundation, AtlantiCare Health Plans, AtlantiCare Behavioral Health and AtlantiCare Health Services. ARMC became the 105th hospital in the nation to attain status as a Magnet™ designated hospital in March of 2004.