



Photography: Benjamin Margalit

Jacob Petrosky, MD, is a general surgeon at University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. He is passionate about helping people overcome chronic health conditions through bariatric surgery.

pressure and/or obstructive sleep apnea who is taking medication for those conditions is a candidate for bariatric surgery if he or she has a BMI above 35.

UH Geauga, he says, offers bariatric and other surgeries in a comfortable setting close to home.

“The nice thing about working in a small hospital is that I usually work with the same team of nurses on every procedure,” Dr. Petrosky says. “I know them very well, and I trust them to provide my patients with everything they need. That consistency is important.”

“Losing weight will help to mitigate a lot of chronic health conditions. But gastric bypass has proven over the past 60 years to also provide metabolic benefits that can reverse diabetes.”

And, in extreme cases where specialized care is needed, all of the resources of the world-class UH system are just a phone call away.

To find out whether you're a candidate to lose weight or reverse your diabetes through bariatric surgery, you can set up a consultation by calling 440-214-3111. Or you can visit uhhospitals.org/bariatric. There you can view a video that explains more about bariatric surgery and request a call from a UH insurance specialist who will follow up with a phone call, usually within 24 hours.

University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center is located at 13207 Ravenna Road, in Chardon.

Weight Loss Surgery

Although most people think of bariatric surgery as a treatment for excessively obese people who need to lose significant pounds, it has other medical benefits as well.

by Ken McEntee

Everybody probably knows somebody with diabetes.

That includes Jacob Petrosky, MD, a general surgeon at University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center, in Chardon.

“My family has a strong history of diabetes—all of my aunts and uncles have it,” Dr. Petrosky reveals. “I’ve witnessed the complications—the heart attacks, the kidney failure and the high blood pressure.”

That first-hand experience with diabetes is a big reason why Dr. Petrosky is passionate about doing bariatric “weight loss” surgery. Although most people think of bariatric surgery as a treatment for excessively obese people who need to lose significant pounds, it has other medical benefits as well, he explains.

“Bariatric surgery is the only medical treatment that can help a person achieve remission from their diabetes,” he says. “Some of my patients have gone home two days after their surgery without needing any

insulin at all and others have significantly reduced their medications. When a diabetic patient has struggled for years to get their A1C below seven, and suddenly they are under six, they are ecstatic.”



He adds that bariatric surgery also can help to treat other metabolic conditions, like hyperlipidemia, along with physical conditions related to obesity—such as hernia recurrence, back and joint pain and obstructive sleep apnea.

Doctors aren’t completely sure why bariatric surgery has proven to be so successful in treating diabetes, but Dr. Petrosky said it seems to be related to the intestinal hormones that are altered during gastric bypass—one of the two most common bariatric procedures.

“Part of it is the weight loss itself that results from bariatric surgery,” he says. “Losing weight will help to mitigate a lot of chronic health conditions. But gastric bypass has proven over the past 60 years to

also provide metabolic benefits that can reverse diabetes.”

During gastric bypass, most of a patient’s stomach is tied off, leaving a ping-pong ball-sized pouch intact, while a portion of the small intestine is bypassed to reduce the body’s absorption of calories.

The other common procedure is the creation of a gastric sleeve by surgically reducing the size of the patient’s stomach.

Normally, a person’s stomach can blow up to about the size of a football. After surgical reduction with a sleeve, the stomach takes on the size and shape of a banana.

Generally, people with a Body Mass Index (BMI) above 40 are considered candidates for weight loss surgery. However, Dr. Petrosky says, a person with diabetes, high blood



UH Geauga Medical Center’s bariatric surgery program is fully accredited by the American College of Surgeons.