

Health Update

Breakthrough Procedure Helps Obese Shed Pounds Safely

(NAPSA)—“We’re just too darn fat . . . and we’re going to do something about it,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson at a press conference announcing that obesity is fast approaching tobacco as the leading cause of preventable death in America.

With two-thirds of U.S. adults officially “too darn fat” and with roughly half of those actually obese, weight-loss surgery is one of the most common surgeries performed nationwide. In fact, the number of bariatric surgeries has jumped 110 percent in the past two years, with more than 100,000 procedures performed in 2003. According to the “New England Journal of Medicine,” this increase has been fueled by the “increase in the number of people who are extremely obese, the failure of diets, exercise and medical therapy and the advent of laparoscopic procedure.”

With the demand for weight-loss surgery more than doubling in just the past two years, “it is important that people know the facts about an important surgical option for the severely obese,” says Nick Teti, Chairman, President and CEO of INAMED Corporation (Santa Barbara, CA), the developer of the LAP-BAND® System.

Since its approval by the Food and Drug Administration in June 2001, the system has transformed more than 20,000 lives in the U.S., and continues to gain in acceptance in major medical centers as a safer, effective surgical alternative for the severely obese patient. It is the preferred weight-loss surgery internationally, with nearly 150,000 procedures performed since clinical



She lost 160 pounds with a new, safer surgical alternative to gastric-bypass.

introduction in 1993.

“Of the surgical options available for the treatment of obesity, the Lap-Band is the safest and only adjustable and reversible choice,” says Dr. Jeff Allen, assistant professor of surgery at the University of Louisville in Kentucky. “It is the least invasive and has a much lower serious complication rate. It is clearly different from the gastric bypass procedure, which has a mortality rate of one in 200 and requires the cutting and stapling of the stomach and intestines.”

An inflatable silicone band is placed laparoscopically around the upper portion of the stomach, creating a small gastric pouch. By creating a new, tiny gastric pouch, the system limits the amount of food the stomach will hold at any time. The inflatable band controls the flow of food from this smaller pouch to the rest of the digestive tract, leaving the patient feeling comfort-

ably full with only a small amount of food, without compromising the absorption of nutrients. Patients continue to feel full for several hours, reducing the urge to eat between meals. The advantages of this breakthrough surgical device for weight loss have been called unparalleled:

- Safer than other weight loss surgeries
- Shorter hospitalization (usually less than 24 hours) and less recovery time
- No stomach stapling or intestinal re-routing
- Only easily reversible weight loss procedure
- Adjustable for an individualized rate of weight loss
- Sustained weight loss and improvement in related health problems.

For more information or to find a surgeon who performs the procedure, log on to: www.lap-band.com.