

# Tipping the Scales in Their Favor

Bariatric surgery helps adolescents  
shed pounds, gain good health

**A**dolescent obesity is an issue that greatly impacts our nation. In the past 20 years, its incidence has nearly tripled. In fact, current estimates indicate that more than four percent of all adolescents in the U.S. are considered extremely obese, making them potential candidates for bariatric surgery.

To address this important issue, Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center and Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital have created an adolescent bariatric surgery program designed to help patients who are 16 to 17 years old improve their quality of life and prevent obesity-related diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension and sleep apnea.

"It's important to offer surgical weight loss options to this population, since clinical evidence suggests that the majority of severely obese teenagers go on to become severely obese adults," explains Thomas Magnuson, M.D., director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Bariatric Surgery. "Most adolescents who are candidates for surgery already have health complications. Our goal is to improve or reverse these problems."

The Johns Hopkins Center for Bariatric Surgery has achieved numerous accolades for its success with adult patients. In fact, the center was recently accredited as a level 1b facility by the Bariatric Surgery Center Network, an accredita-

tion program of the American College of Surgeons (see page 3 for more details). In addition, it is accredited by many insurance companies based on its quality of care and positive, long-term outcomes.

Last year alone, physicians in the center performed nearly 400 bariatric surgeries.

All adolescent candidates will be required to undergo a series of evaluations through the Weight Management Center at Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

and participate in Weigh Smart, a multidisciplinary weight management program for youngsters and teens. The program provides medical, nutritional, educational and behavioral support to help patients and their families develop healthy lifestyle habits and ensure that they are ready for bariatric surgery. The program has had much success in treating pediatric obesity and was one of 16 in the country to be

**Thomas Magnuson, M.D.**  
*Director of the Johns Hopkins  
Center for Bariatric Surgery*



## To be considered for the Bariatric Surgery Program, an adolescent must:

- Be 16-17 years of age
- Have made past attempts at weight loss
- Be more than 100 pounds overweight
- Have a supportive family
- Make a commitment to lifestyle change

*For more information call 410-550-0409.*

appointed to a national task force to develop recommendations for best practices in pediatric weight management. Weigh Smart also has been recognized in Maryland with a Governor's Citation for increasing physical activity among the state's youth.

To participate in the adolescent bariatric surgery program, patients and their families must commit to at least six months of assessment, education and counseling before determining if the patient is appropriate for surgery. This helps to ensure a positive outcome and long-term success.

—Kim Fabian

For more information about the Adolescent  
Bariatric Surgery Program, call 410-550-0409.