

HOW TO JUDGE THE QUALITY OF A WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

– KNOW THE FACTS –

Are you considering weight loss surgery for severe obesity? If so, you may have started researching your options, including possible results. As you move toward a decision, it's important to realize that all weight loss surgery programs are not alike. Your future health can be greatly influenced by the quality of the program and physician you choose. Use the checklist below to help you make a decision you'll feel comfortable with for weight loss surgery. Remember, your long-term health and success should be your most important goals.

Ask yourself these essential questions:

- H**ow experienced is your surgeon?
- E**xactly what surgical options are offered, and which is best for you?
- A**re support programs in place to help you maintain your weight loss?
- L**ook at the hospital's technology. Is it the latest?
- T**alk with others who have had this surgery. What was their experience?
- H**ow does the hospital affect the outcome of weight loss surgery?

Answers to help you are on the back of this sheet. For more information, go to www.sentara.com/quality or call 1-800-SENTARA.



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✓ **How experienced is your surgeon?**

Make sure your surgeon is board-certified and, if possible, fellowship trained in the procedure you are considering. How long has your surgeon been performing weight loss surgery? How many procedures has he performed, and what is his percentage of success? Experience, training, and success in weight loss surgery are very important qualities to look for.

✓ **Exactly what surgical options are offered, and which is best for you?**

There are several different surgical techniques available, including traditional surgical incision, laparoscopic (minimally invasive) surgery, and lap bands. Find out what techniques your surgeon is skilled in, and why he recommends a particular procedure for you.

✓ **Are support programs in place to help you maintain your weight loss?**

The actual procedure is only part of what makes a weight loss surgery successful. Proper preparation and a thorough understanding of what lifestyle changes you will need to make and maintain are paramount to your success. Find out what nutritional, psychological, and medical programs your surgeon and hospital offer to support you through this life-changing journey.

✓ **Look at the hospital's technology. Is it the latest?**

Sentara remains at the forefront of technological innovation. Our operating rooms offer the latest equipment, and minimally invasive procedures are used whenever possible to assure patients the fastest recovery with the least amount of pain.

✓ **Talk with others who have had this surgery. What was their experience?**

Literally thousands of patients have undergone successful weight loss surgery at Sentara. The physicians performing weight loss surgery at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital and Sentara CarePlex Hospital all have stellar track records earned over hundreds and, in some cases, well over a thousand procedures. We encourage you to attend a pre-surgery seminar, speak with the surgeons, staff, and past patients, and find out how Sentara's program can make a meaningful difference in your success and health.

✓ **How does the hospital affect the outcome of weight loss surgery?**

You want a hospital that is not only committed to patient safety, but one that has a proven track record or success. Sentara has won prestigious national awards for our innovative patient safety programs – for staff training, pharmacy and medication safeguards, patient identification verification, and 24-hour specialist surveillance of critically ill patients. You'll see extensive safety efforts in place throughout every department of every hospital in our system.

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