

Deaconess Weight Loss Solutions Bariatric Surgery Program

In order to help patients plan accordingly, we would like to give you a detailed explanation of the pre-operative process for bariatric surgery at our program after you have completed a New Patient Seminar and have scheduled your first New Patient appointment. We try to do our best to make the process as smooth as possible for each patient, but occasionally issues do arise that are out of our control. Here is a guide to the pre-operative process/requirements of our program:

- **6 month pre-operative program:** the pre-operative process takes a minimum of 6 consecutive months. Please keep in mind that it can take longer as things may come up that need further workup, etc. In addition, some insurance plans do require additional months (i.e. 7 months or more). We do our best to let you know how many months you will need to complete when we call to schedule your first appointment. Once you have completed all the insurance requirements we will submit your information to your insurance company for approval which can approximately take up to 30 days, but the process may take longer pending the insurance. Along with insurance approval you will also have to be medically cleared by the clinic physician prior to being scheduled with one of our surgeons. Please note there is no guarantee when you will have surgery as it will depend on you, your health, the insurance, and the surgeon's schedule. Therefore, it may be 7 + months from the time of your first visit to the time of the actual surgery. Our 6 month timeline starts from the day of your first full office visit with us (not from the date of the seminar); keep in mind your insurance company may require additional months.
- **Monthly visits with the Physician, Dietician, and Exercise specialist:** each month you will meet with all 3 of these staff members so please plan your schedule accordingly to allow time for your appointment. Please keep in mind that some insurance plans require consecutive monthly visits with our program and the insurance company may require you to restart the program if you miss a month. It is also possible that if you miss two consecutive months with our program that we will require you to restart even if insurance does not.
- **Food and Activity logs:** our program and most insurance plans require you to track your food and activity. This can be done on paper or on a phone app such as My Fitness Pal. Please bring this to each and every visit. If you decided to log on paper we strongly encourage you to use the form we provide and write legibly. Small or Spiral notebook cannot be accepted due to lack of ability to scan.
- **Nutrition classes:** we require each patient to complete 6 nutrition classes prior to surgery. We ask that you do 1 class per month in order to complete these before surgery. These must be completed before we can submit for approval from your insurance. These classes can be done at our office or on our website. More information will be given at your first visit.
- **Bariatric support group:** we require each patient to attend at least 1 bariatric support group at our facility prior to surgical clearance.
- **5% weight loss:** we require each patient to lose 5% of their starting weight (weight obtained at your first office visit with us) prior to surgery approval. This is to help make the surgery safer for you and to help build sustainable lifestyle changes that can be maintained after surgery.
- **Psychology evaluation:** our program and insurance requires each surgical patient to undergo a psychology evaluation and obtain psychological clearance for bariatric surgery. You will be referred to a psychologist for the evaluation at your first visit. If the physician feels it would be beneficial for you to see a psychologist for additional therapy due to the results of your evaluation then we will place a referral for you to do so.
- **Medical Clearance testing:** this is typically done around month 5 and involves lab work, a chest x ray and an EKG. If there are abnormalities found on this testing, they may require additional workup. Keep in mind some insurance companies may require additional testing.
- **After-Hours Care:** All patients can leave a non-urgent voicemail or send a MyChart message for staff to answer any non-urgent medical questions during normal business hours – Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm (please allow up to 48 hours for a response). If a pre-surgery patient has an urgent medical issue please contact your

Primary Care Provider or go to the nearest emergency department. If a post-operative patient is having an urgent medical issues you can contact the On-Call Surgeon at Evansville Surgical Associates 812- 424-8231 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

- **Other:** Please keep in mind that some insurance plans have additional requirements. This will be discussed with each patient at their initial visit. In addition, we require that you are established with a primary care provider in order to participate in our program.

Once you have met all of the required program requirements, the requirements set by your insurance company, have been medically cleared by the clinic physician, and our office has received surgery approval from your insurance company you will then be scheduled with one of our surgeons.

Your initial appointment with the surgeon may last up to 4-5 hours, your second appointment with the surgeon and all post op appointments may last up to 2-3 hours. During each visit with our office you will see the physician, dietitian, and exercise specialist; so please plan your scheduled appointments accordingly. Pre-testing labs and an (EGD) upper endoscopy will be scheduled to be done some time after your initial appointment with the surgeon; usually 2-3 weeks later. Once you have had your EGD the surgeon will let us know if we can move forward with scheduling your bariatric surgery. Once your surgery date is obtained we will schedule you to see the surgeon again prior to surgery; you may also be required to have additional pre-testing at that time. Please keep in mind any out of pocket expenses due by your insurance company must be paid prior to your bariatric surgery since this is considered an elective surgery. If at any time the surgeon or our physician feels you need additional testing or if you are not a good candidate for surgery with our office you will be notified of this as soon as possible.

By signing below, I agree that I have read and understand these requirements.

Signature

Date