10 Signs You are Getting Healthier, Even if the Scale Doesn’t Move

Written by Beth Donovan of Spark People
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Sometimes the scale doesn’t budge and you wonder if you are getting any healthier on your fitness plan. Well, here are 10 signs that you are!

1. You feel like taking on something new. That’s a great sign that you are getting healthier. It shows a heightened energy level and more active mentality. You are obviously ready for new challenges that you weren’t ready for before you became fitter.

2. You notice a new pep in your step. Things are becoming easier for you. Gravity isn’t pulling you to the ground as easily, and maybe your mood isn’t either. You have some new resilience.

3. Your clothes are fitting differently. Maybe your clothes are looser; maybe they are tighter over your growing muscles. Whichever way it is, be sure and take note and dress to impress. Wearing the same old stuff from your closet that no longer fits is discouraging. Wearing better fitting clothes, be they from a store or a friend, will always make you feel and look better.

4. Your medical test scores are improving. My triglycerides, cholesterol, blood sugar levels, and thyroid readings have all changed since I’ve lost weight. Even when I plateau for months at a time (frustrating!), those tests tell me I’m going in the right direction medically.

5. You start taking that one extra step. Usually the saying is to “Go the extra mile.” I say “Go the extra step.” A mile is a long way, but if you even find yourself having the energy to take that extra step, congratulate yourself. You are building on something. A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.

6. You look for ways to make other’s lives easier. If you are looking for ways to pay it forward and make other’s lives easier, then your needs are met. That’s a great sign! According to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the basic needs of a human have to be met in order to even consider outer social relationships, such as kindness and love. In my opinion, if you find yourself doing random acts of kindness, be assured you are blessed and well. I don’t think we can afford to forget the connection of mind, body, and spirit as a human whole in wellness.

7. You feel more positive and energetic. That is a natural by product of getting healthier. The body starts working better and when it does, it releases feel good chemicals in the brain, delivers energy to the cells more efficiently, and you feel better day by day.

(Continued, page 2...)
8. Your hair, skin and nails start to look marvelous. As a result of getting the right nutrients into your body, your body will start to look better all over. Not only will you lose/gain weight on a proper nutrition plan, but your hair, skin and nails will start to look lustrous too. Have you ever had someone tell you to take a certain supplement and your nails/hair will grow? Well, they aren’t far off. Nutrients are known to feed the hair and nails, even though they are technically dead. They still come from a living hair follicle and a living nail bed. Skin is very much alive and in need of nutrients. After all, look at how much skin you have.

9. You look forward to your workout time. This is definitely a good sign. Your body is craving movement and the endorphins it brings. Endorphins are feel-good chemicals released in the brain that bust stress during and after exercise. The more you move the more you will crave moving. This will lead to a healthier cardiovascular system, leaner muscles, a brighter mindset, and weight control.

10. You crave healthier fare. If you are starting to think a fresh banana sounds better than banana chips, you are well on your way. Is your chocolate getting a bit darker these days? Are you choosing food closer to its natural state or cutting out soda and liking it? Good for you! Progress not perfection! Keep changing the little things and the bigger lifestyle change will come.

As you can see, the scale is not the final decision maker as to whether you are getting healthier on your health plan. YOU are. Look for and celebrate the little things that you find new to your life

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Mindful Eating Class Update

The next Mindful Eating Class will be held Saturday, March 21st from 10-12:30pm. This is an exciting offering to all SWL patients! Cost is $50 and we do not bill insurance for this class. If interested, e-mail Krystal Tracy at ktracy@emhs.org or call (207) 973-4037. Deadline to register is March 10th for this session.

Mindful eating has been shown to help people:

1) Reduce overeating
2) Lose weight
3) Cope with chronic eating problems, and reduce anxious thoughts about food and your body
4) Improve the symptoms of Type 2 diabetes

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Surgical Weight Loss Support Groups

We encourage regular attendance to these groups. Attending groups is one way to re-affirm the importance of your commitment to surgery. Studies show those who attend groups, weigh themselves regularly, and record dietary intake are more likely to manage their weight. **Send your e-mail to Lynn Bolduc if you would like to be put on an e-mail reminder list for any one of the groups**— *Lbolduc@emh.org*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Led By</th>
<th>Upcoming Dates</th>
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<td>Bangor, EMMC</td>
<td>1st Friday of the month</td>
<td>4:30-6:30pm</td>
<td>Mason Auditorium, 2nd floor</td>
<td>Lynn Bolduc, SWL Manager</td>
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<td>Feb 6th – Dr. Dayhim</td>
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<td>*Dr. Liliav presenting 6-6:30pm</td>
<td>*Clothing swap March 6th – Dr. Dayhim</td>
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<td>March 17th – Dr. Toder</td>
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<td>5:30-6:30pm</td>
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<td>Dean Hospital</td>
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<td>5:30-7:00pm</td>
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<td>Presque Isle,</td>
<td>1st Wednesday of the month</td>
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<td>McCain Conference Room</td>
<td>Nicole Doughty, Angel Hebert, and Kate Parsons, RD</td>
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<td>TAMC</td>
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Staying On Track Support Groups

For patients who have had weight loss surgery. Due to the room size and sensitivity of topics discussed, we ask that you come alone to this group. This group is open to ANYONE who has had weight loss surgery. The group size is typically small.

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<th>Led By</th>
<th>Upcoming Dates</th>
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<td>Bangor, Eastern Maine Healthcare</td>
<td>2nd Wednesday of every month</td>
<td>5:00-6:00 pm</td>
<td>Diabetes, Endocrine Nutrition Center, 905 Union St., Suite 11</td>
<td>Dr. Nina Boulard, Clinical Psychologist</td>
<td>Jan 14th</td>
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<td>Mall</td>
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<td>Presque Isle, TAMC</td>
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<td>4:00-5:00 pm</td>
<td>The Aroostook Medical Center, McCain A Conference Room</td>
<td>Dr. Nina Boulard, Clinical Psychologist</td>
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<td>*Conducted remotely through ITV</td>
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<td>March 4th</td>
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It’s a Baby Boom!

In case you hadn’t noticed their growing bellies from behind their desks, two of your EMMC Surgical Weight Loss dietitians are pregnant! Valerie Curtis and Kaileigh Duym are each expecting their first babies (both girls!) in February and March, respectively. Each will be out of office for 12 weeks. Don’t fret – both will be back in the late spring and the wonderful Tama Fitzpatrick will still be in office. During their absence, you may have the opportunity to meet Andrea Skwirz, SWL’s temporary dietitian. Andrea is a new resident of Bangor and is thrilled to be part of the EMMC team covering the maternity leave position for two of the weight loss dietitians, Kaileigh and Valerie. Andrea graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst with her Bachelor of Science in Nutrition in 2005 as well as her Master in Public Health in 2014. Andrea has seven years experience working as an RD in both inpatient and outpatient settings. In her free time Andrea enjoys cooking, cross-country skiing, hiking, biking and spending time with family and friends.

Better Diabetes Remission After Weight Loss Surgery Than Other Methods (Reuters)

More than 20 years of evidence suggests that bariatric surgery produces greater weight loss and more type 2 diabetes remissions than nonsurgical treatments, according to a new clinical review in JAMA Surgery. Experts from the NIDDK, NHLBI, the Group Health Cooperative in Seattle and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center summarize the evidence since 1991, when the NIH held a consensus panel on bariatric surgery. Surgery patients tend to lose 20 to 30% of their body weight, compared to little or no weight loss for similar people who do not get surgery. Researchers say however, that there are gaps in the research, including how long diabetes remission lasts, how often complications occur from surgery and what predicts those complications, and to measure long-term health outcomes. They say there should be also more research into optimal dietary and nutritional management, as well as how to manage specific complications of bariatric operations. “The relationship between BMI and mortality is not as strong as we thought it was, but between type 2 diabetes and death, it is,” said Dr. Justin Dimick, who wrote an accompanying editorial to the study.
Healthy Alternatives for the New Year (and New You!)

Here are some of the dietitians’ top recommendations to lighten up your diet

Instead of peanut butter... try PB2

PB2 is a de-fatted powdered peanut product. You simply add a little water and mix to whatever consistency you like! Many patients enjoy it mixed into their protein shakes. PB2 comes in traditional peanut butter and chocolate peanut butter flavors and can be found at retailers like WalMart. Regular peanut butter is 200 calories per 2 tablespoon and PB2 is only 45 calories!

Instead of cow’s milk in your protein shake... try almond milk

Looking to save a few calories, but still have some flavor in your protein shakes? Consider almond milk, a cow’s milk alternative made from, yes you probably guessed it, almonds. With skim or 1% milk around 100 calories per cup; unsweetened almond milk is a mere 30 calories per cup! Almond milk has a big boost of calcium and is also available in an unsweetened vanilla flavor. This is a great fit for those who may not tolerate milk well, just keep in mind almond milk does not have high protein content, so it’s best to mix with protein powder.

Instead of Crystal Light... try infused water

Kick the habit of artificial sweeteners by flavoring your own water with natural flavors. Herbs like mint, basil, rosemary, and even parsley can make a nice addition to plain water. Consider pairing with other flavors like cinnamon, citrus, apple, cucumber and more. At retailers like Amazon and WalMart water bottles are available, designed for infusing, with a drop-in core.

Discover the versatility of nonfat, plain Greek yogurt

Greek yogurt is a well-known diet staple for many SWL patients, but did you know that plain Greek yogurt is a multi-purpose substitute for foods like mayonnaise and sour cream? Consider mixing a Ranch dip package with nonfat plain Greek yogurt. Serve with veggies and you have a high protein snack or meal. Instead of flavor-less fat-free sour cream, try plain Greek yogurt with a few dashes of hot sauce with your next Mexican-inspired dish!

Instead of pasta... try spaghetti squash

Spaghetti squash is a very interesting vegetable. From the outside, it’s big, round and light yellow. Once cooked, the inside flakes away like cooked spaghetti! This squash is quite easy to prepare; you can roast in the oven, or is pressed for time, simply microwave for about 10 minutes once cut in half. By comparison, a cup of cooked pasta is about 100 calories, whereas a cup of spaghetti squash is only 30 calories!

Instead of butter and salad dressings... try infused olive oil and balsamic vinegar

This is perhaps one of our most favorite and delicious recommendations to make. It has been well established that olive oil is a wonderful choice for a heart healthy fat. While it does contain calories (about 100 per tablespoon), it has a very healthy fat profile full of unsaturated fatty acid chains. This is not the case with butter, which, although a whole food, contains primarily saturated fatty acids. What makes olive oil even more exciting is the recent trend of infusing flavors, like Tuscan herb, Meyer lemon, even hot and spicy, into the oil! Fiore is a local company that offers a seemingly endless variety of infused olive oils that really add a lot of pizazz to vegetables and other dishes. What’s more is that they also offer infused vinegars which are excellent on salad greens, among other dishes. Fiore has many locations throughout the state, from Bar Harbor, to Bangor, to Freeport.

Instead of rice... try quinoa

Quinoa (pronounced keen-wah) is a fiber and protein-rich whole grain that is very easy and versatile. The seed itself is what you purchase in the store. Quinoa is quite easy to cook, using 2 cups of water for every 1 cup of dry quinoa. This seed cooks up rather quickly, about 15 minutes, into a fluffy-yet-textured side dish that can be for breakfast, lunch or dinner! Per ½ cup serving, quinoa provides around 100 calories, 3 grams fiber and 4 grams protein. It is also dense in vitamins and minerals, like magnesium, iron and B-6.
Quarterly Newsletter

If you want to receive this newsletter electronically, please register by going to: www.swlp.emmc.org; click on “Support after surgery” then find “newsletter.” Hard copies of the newsletter are distributed at the support groups and dietitian visits. The SKINNY is published four times per year. You can also e-mail Lynn directly at Lbolduc@emh.org and she will add you. Once on the mailing list you will monthly receive electronic e-mail reminders about the group.

Clothing Swaps

In an attempt to help our patients as they change sizes quickly after weight loss, EMMC Surgical Weight Loss has been having clothing swaps since 2000. We ask that you consider donating gently used, clean clothing. You do not need to donate clothing in order to take advantage of the swap. You can take clothing without giving and give without taking. No money will be exchanged. The clothes not taken at the end of the night are given to charities such as Salvation Army, Goodwill or Shoestring Thrift shop. People usually bring the clothing between 4-4:30P on the night of the clothing swap and the swap part happens immediately after the support group (6:30pm) in Mason Conference Room. This is a patient led activity which can always use more volunteers. Please contact Lynn Bolduc at lbolduc@emh.org if you are interested in how to pay-it-forward.

*Please note that we do not have a way to store clothing brought in advance and left at our offices.

2015 Dates: Fridays Feb 2nd, May 5th, Sept 4th, and Dec 4th

Meatball Recipe

Suitable for at least 6 week post-op

**Ingredients**

- 1/2 lb 93% lean ground beef
- 1/2 lb lean ground turkey breast
- 1/3 cup dry breadcrumbs
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 Tbsp finely chopped onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley or 1 Tbsp dried parsley
- 1 large egg
- 2 Tbsp skim milk
- 1/4 tsp black pepper

**Preparation**

- Preheat oven to 400°.
- In a large bowl, with your hands gently mix all ingredients until combined well.
- Roll the mixture into 1 1/4-inch balls. Place the meatballs onto ungreased baking sheets and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until browned and cooked through.

Yield: 18 meatballs

**Nutrition Facts**

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<th>Serving Size: 3 meatballs</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Fiber:</strong> 0</td>
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<td><strong>Protein:</strong> 21g</td>
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Recipe from:
Coming in January 2015: Staying on Track support group at TAMC

This Presque Isle group is for post-surgical patients only and is facilitated by Nina Boulard, Ph.D remotely though ITV. The purpose of the group is to give post-surgical patients a place to discuss challenges they may experience and problem-solve coping strategies and solutions to these challenges. Even patients who have had bariatric surgery can sometimes struggle with food and weight issues. However, with support and hard work, long-term success is an achievable goal. This group is a place to receive support when challenges arise and to celebrate successes. If you are a post-surgical patient, please join us at TAMC the first Wednesday of each month from 4-5pm. This meeting will take place just before the regular support group. For more information, contact Nicole Doughty at TAMC at 768-4358.

Other Support Group Changes

Effective November 2014 the MDI surgical weight loss support group is cancelled. Poor attendance was the primary reason. We are hopeful in 2015 to start a support group near the Ellsworth area and will keep everyone posted through email and our newsletter. We also have plans in later 2015 to begin an online support group.

Patients Continue to Lose Bone at Least 2 Years After Bariatric Surgery, Shows Study

A new 50-patient study showed gastric bypass patients continued to lose bone for at least two years after surgery, "even after their weight stabilizes." Bone density was 5 to 7% lower at the spine and 7 to 10% lower at the hip compared with patients who did not have surgery. Principal investigator Dr. Elaine Yu of Massachusetts General Hospital commented, “The long-term consequences of this substantial bone loss are unclear, but it might put them at increased risk of fracture, or breaking a bone. Therefore, bone health may need to be monitored in patients undergoing bariatric surgery.” Dr. Yu, an endocrinologist, noted that although bariatric surgery may cause potential risks to bone health, it is “the most effective treatment for severe obesity and offers phenomenal health benefits.” The findings were presented at the annual joint meeting of the International Society of Endocrinology and the Endocrine Society meeting.

My Surgical Weight Loss Story

As I prepared for this life changing event and followed through on all of the Pre Surgery appointments and testing… the time got closer to a new calendar year. It all came to fruition that my surgery day would be New Year’s Eve Day. My first thought was, “Great, for once I will make the resolution to lose weight and have it really come true this time!”

The recovery time went well and I was out of work for only two weeks! I was more than ready to get back to my office and start this new routine and way of eating. I was excited and motivated by the weight loss and by mid-February I had lost 25 lbs. Due to this weight loss, I was now (devastatingly) able to feel a mass in my breast. A long story short, it turned out to be Stage 2 breast cancer. I had a partial mastectomy and 7 weeks of radiation treatments immediately. Once I recovered from the radiation burns I was eligible for a clinical trial which involved taking a “chemo” pill for the next 3 years.

At this point, I am cancer free, down 50 lbs, and still losing weight slow and steady. I am feeling so good and receive compliments constantly on my weight loss (which makes me feel even better)!

EMMC Surgical Weight Loss literally saved my life and gave me my life back. I feel like the “real” me already and sing the praises of this supportive program and Dr. Dayhim’s team! Thank you both for saving my life and giving me my life back!

Gratefully Yours,

Linda P.