

Winter wellness: any movement matters

By Tama Fitzpatrick, RD, CDE, Adapted from Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) Magazine article titled “Moovin’ and Groovin’- Simple and Easy Ways to Stay Active” by Dr. Roger Adams

Staying active can be very challenging during the cold, dark days of winter. Social distancing certainly can add to the problem. This article will provide helpful information and ideas centered around increasing your activity.

Increasing daily physical activity will help:

- Regulate your metabolism
- Improve insulin and glucose control
- Keep joints mobile
- Strengthen your legs
- Balance your energy
- Keep your house and yard tidy

Simple and easy ways to stay active

Physical activity is a key part of good health (along with nutrition and sleep). Here are some simple ways to incorporate more physical activity into your daily life and make it a habit you will want to stick with for the long haul.

1. Stand up more often
2. Have a dance party (in person or virtual)
3. Practice yoga or other meditation-based activities, like Pilates
4. Move around during your lunch break--walk inside or outside or go up and down the stairs.
5. Find a hobby or craft to do indoors.

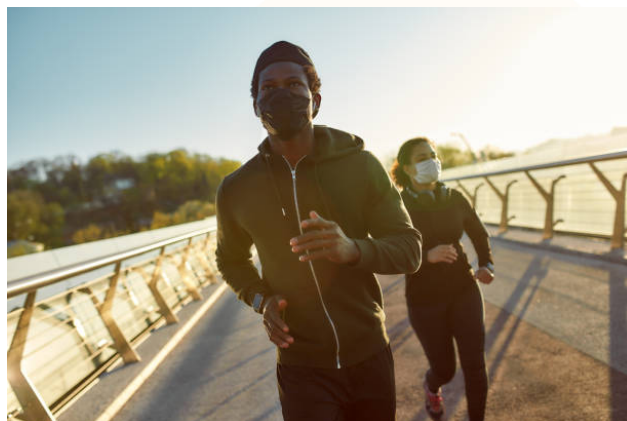
If finding the time to incorporate regular exercise is the problem, take a step back and focus on increasing any activity you currently do in your normal routine. Rather than seeing it as something extra to fit into your day, look for ways to increase opportunities for activity.

If you are going into the office

- Park further away from the entrance.
- Use the stairs if possible.
- Take 15 minutes out of your lunch break to move around or walk inside or outside.
- Set reminders to get up and stretch your legs.

If you are at home

- Schedule a daily break to take a walk away from your workspace.
- Set reminders to get up each hour and do a few household chores.
- Turn a conference call into a walking meeting by putting in your headphones and taking your mobile device on a walk with you.



Although it may seem like our work is the only thing responsible for our sedentary lifestyles, what we do during our non-work time can also have an impact.



Often, we spend far too much “down time” watching TV or scrolling endlessly on our phone. Adding active time to any part of your day can help increase your physical activity levels.

- Yard work, snow shoveling, or gardening
- Washing or cleaning your car
- Housework, especially vacuuming and sweeping
- Walking your dog
- Do-it-yourself (DIY) home projects like painting and sanding

If you feel overwhelmed when thinking about how to add more exercise into your day, remember that you are probably already doing things that are considered active. Focus on how you can increase your physical activity frequency, duration, and quantity. Keep it simple and start with activities that are easy to add into your everyday life. Rather than force it, look for opportunities that are around you.

It is okay to steadily work yourself up to a regular exercise plan or program. Investing in quality active minutes throughout your day will add value to your life and health. Whether you choose to exercise or simply focus on increasing your active time, your main goal should be to incorporate movement during the day and increase your physical activity.

Welcome Amber Gard, our new program manager

For those who haven't heard, there's a new program manager for Northern Light Surgical Weight Loss. **Amber Gard MS, RD, LD** joined the surgical weight loss team in the fall of 2020.

She is a registered, licensed dietitian who previously worked as an inpatient dietitian at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center for two years, providing medical nutrition therapy to a variety of patients including intensive care, pediatrics, and surgical populations. During this time, she worked with many post-operative bariatric patients, providing education and support before they were discharged home.

Amber completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in food science and Human Nutrition at the University of Maine in Orono. She is a member of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery and an active member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.



Amber's role is to help patients with the process of weight loss surgery, including obtaining health information from primary care physicians and other healthcare professionals, answering patient questions and helping to highlight all aspects of the program. Amber is available for support and advice throughout your surgical weight loss journey.

What is Telehealth Medicine and How Can I Get the Most from it?

By Amber Gard, RD Adapted from Your Weight Matters Magazine by Dr. Craig Primack

We are all making lifestyle changes because of the COVID-19 pandemic that seems to impact virtually all aspects of our life. Many may be facing challenges with seeing medical professionals in the office because of the ever-changing healthcare system right now. Because of this, many providers at Northern Light, including the surgical weight loss team, are using telemedicine to meet with patients for routine appointments.

What is Telemedicine?

Telemedicine is the ability to meet with your healthcare provider or medical professional through video conferencing or phone instead of an in-person visit. Depending on the reason for your visit, our providers can offer advice, complete pre-op and post-op visits, and complete evaluations. Some of the medical professionals within our team that you can connect with virtually include:

- Surgeons
- Nurse Practitioners
- Dietitians
- Psychologists
- Primary Care Providers
- Bariatrician



Face-to-Face Telemedicine

During your telemedicine visit that we offer, you can talk with our providers in real-time using phone or video chat. They can ask you questions, and you can describe what you are experiencing and how you are feeling, much like what you would do in a regular office visit. Common platforms used for telemedicine video chats include:

- Zoom
- Skype
- Phone calls

For telemedicine visits that are performed using video chats, you will need an internet-connected device that has a camera and microphone. This can be a smartphone, mobile device, laptop, or desktop computer. Although appointments done via video chat can feel less personal as an in-person office visit, typically you can still see our providers and they can still see you.

Benefits of Telemedicine

There are two major benefits that come from using telemedicine platforms for your healthcare:

Saving Time: Patients spend an average of two hours for a 20-minute in-person office visit including travel and wait time. Telemedicine gives you the freedom of having visits right when you need them. Spending less time in waiting rooms also reduces your chances of possibly contracting an illness. Before COVID-19, telemedicine was used primarily for rural and specialty consultations because it saved so

much travel and wait time. Now, because of COVID-19, telemedicine visits have increased because patients have realized they can see their providers and still protect their health by social distancing.

Saving Money: Telemedicine also saves money, which makes it even more convenient. It will usually eliminate the need to take time off from work, drive to the appointment, and finding childcare for the duration of the appointment. A telemedicine visit can also be less expensive, as you may not have to pay for the office charge depending on what insurance carrier you have.

Telemedicine and Weight

If your telemedicine visit is about your weight, weight loss, or weight-related health conditions, it helps if you have a scale at home. You will want to take your weight before you start your visit so you can share this information with your dietitian, surgeon, or nurse practitioner. They will want to have this data when the visit begins. You may want to invest in your own body composition scale to monitor your weight loss changes. There are two we like best: the Tanita BC-730F FitScan Full Body Composition Monitor that can be found at <https://www.3rresources.com/bc730f-black/>. Our other favorite is the RENPHO Bluetooth Rechargeable Smart Scale (Model # ES-28ML) which can be found at <http://renpho.com/collections/renpho-scales/products/smart-body-fat-scale-premium>.

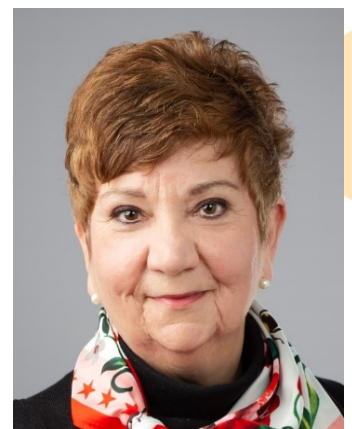
Welcome Anna Welcome, MD, FACOG, FOMA, ABOM



Northern Light Medical Weight Management (formerly Non-Surgical Weight Loss) has the pleasure of bringing on a Bariatrician **Anna Welcome, MD**. Dr. Welcome is an Obesity Medicine specialist with over 18 years of experience in the medical field. She graduated from the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University medical school in 2002. She most recently has been practicing Obesity Medicine at Bronson Healthcare in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Dr. Welcome is a fellow of the Obesity Medicine Association and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Welcome is here to help oversee our patient's safe journey to a healthier weight beyond the immediate post-op period. She will help to address the patient's needs using an individual comprehensive program of diet, exercise and behavior modification.

Welcome Mari Anne Rivera, ACNP

We would also like to extend a warm welcome to **Mari Anne Rivera** as our new nurse practitioner at Northern Light Medical Weight Management. Mari Anne earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing Practice from Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island and her Master of Science from the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Alabama. She has most recently been employed at the Katahdin Valley Health Center in Houlton, Maine as a Nurse Practitioner. Mari Anne has a passion for nutrition and helping patients reach their weight loss goals. This weight loss team provides long-term bariatric care focused on maximizing weight maintenance and minimizing complications associated with weight-loss surgery.



Recipes

Pan-Roasted Chicken and Vegetables

Recipe courtesy of Taste of Home

Ingredients

- 2 pounds red potatoes (about 6 medium), cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ in pieces
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed, divided
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon pepper, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon paprika
- 6 bone-in chicken thighs
- 6 cups fresh baby spinach (about 6 ounces)



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°. In a large bowl, combine potatoes, onion, oil, garlic, $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon rosemary and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper; toss to coat. Transfer to a baking pan coated with cooking spray.
2. In a small bowl mix paprika and the remaining salt, rosemary and pepper. Sprinkle chicken with paprika mixture; arrange over vegetables. Roast until a thermometer inserted in chicken reads 170°-175° and vegetables are just tender, 35-40 minutes
3. Remove chicken to a serving platter; keep warm. Top vegetables with spinach. Roast until vegetables are tender and spinach is wilted, 8-10 minutes longer. Stir vegetables to combine; serve with chicken.

Recipe suitable for Phase 5 diet plan

Servings: 6

Nutrition info: Calories 357, Protein 28g, Total Carbs 28g, Total fat 14g

Simple Salmon Cakes

Recipe by Robin Thomas MS, RD

Ingredients:

- 1 7.5-ounce can salmon, skin removed
- ¼ cup plain, dry breadcrumbs
- ½ cup finely chopped red onion
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh dill, or 1 tsp dried
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tbsp reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons horseradish
- Vegetable oil cooking spray



Directions:

1. Mix all the ingredients except the cooking spray in a medium-size bowl.
2. Form into 4 equal size patties.
3. Coat a medium nonstick pan with cooking spray; heat over medium heat.
4. Cook the salmon cakes on both sides until golden brown.

Chili Sauce may be used in place of horseradish

Serving size: 2 patties

Nutrition Info: Calories 280, Protein 27g, Total Carbs 16 g, Total Fat 11g

Surgical Weight Loss Support Groups

Did you know...

- Regular attendance at support group doubles the likelihood of successful weight loss after surgery
- Those who regularly attend support group have 3.7x greater success with weight loss surgery
- We recommend that you join our online support group via Zoom. This group is intended for those who are pursuing weight loss surgery and those who have already had weight loss surgery
- Each group features a Northern Light bariatric dietitian, surgeon and our program coordinator to help answer any questions you may have.
- This will be **the last SKINNY** that the program is putting out. We will be using the online support group to provide pertinent information and announcements to patients.
- If you are interested in participating in our online support group, please email one of our dietitians at vmcurtis@northernlight.org or tfitzpatrick@northernlight.org

To keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, Northern Light Surgical Weight Loss Support Groups will be held online only.

Online: (Guest speakers/surgeons: TBA)

Third Tuesday	Online via Zoom	5-6 pm	Northern Light Surgical Weight Loss Dietitians	January 19, 2021 February 16, 2021 March 16, 2021 April 20, 2021
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Bangor: Northern Light Health Center - Staying on Track Support Group

(for patients who have had weight loss surgery):

When	Where	Time	Leaders	Upcoming Groups
Second Wednesday	Zoom during Covid 19	5-6 pm	Dr. Nina Boulard, Clinical Psychologist	January 13, 2021 February 10, 2021 March 10, 2021 April 14, 2021

*Due to the small room size and sensitivity of topics discussed, we ask that you come alone to this group.

This group is now open to **ANYONE** who has had weight loss surgery. The group size is typically small.

New Changes Coming January 2021

Patient's Primary Care Providers to Complete Labs:

The new year is bringing new and exciting changes to the Northern Light Surgical Weight Loss program. One of these changes is having Primary Care Providers order, evaluate, and treat labs for post-op bariatric patients at 6-month, 12-month, 18-month and annually thereafter. Providers will receive a letter once a patient is scheduled for surgery notifying them of the labs recommended by the bariatric surgical society. It is also important for patients to remember to advocate for themselves and be certain these labs are completed.



Follow-up Visits:

Northern Light Surgical Weight Loss is comprised of exceptional people that help to make up our comprehensive team. Beginning in January 2021, we will be utilizing all our team members to provide thorough follow-up care to our patients. Patients still meet with the bariatric surgeon for two-week follow up, and then will work primarily with our dietitians, nurse practitioners, and our bariatrician for long term care.

The Last SKINNY

The Winter 2021 edition of the SKINNY will be the last. We have enjoyed providing the SKINNY newsletter with recipes, patient stories and announcements for patients. With the new era in technology it is easier than ever for patients to find appropriate foods and recipes for their journey, and to connect with one another to share success stories. We will be using our Online Support Group on the 3rd Tuesday of each month to provide important information and announcements for our program.

More Resources:

Information Session (online only)

A new information session is up and running, it can be found on our website at www.northernlighthouse.org/swlclass. This information session, recorded by our Medical Director and bariatric surgeon Dr. Toder, contains all the important information a patient would need to know before starting their journey. It can also serve as a great refresher for those who have already had weight loss surgery or who are several months into the program. Furthermore, Dr. Toder will be offering two live zoom information sessions this winter, one on February 9th, 2021 and the other on March 23rd, 2021. Make sure to tune in!

Physical Therapy Videos

Check out our Physical Therapy videos. The 50-minute PT session is divided into short chapters and is available for those starting the program, as well as those who would like to refresh their knowledge on a well-balanced exercise plan. The videos can be found at www.northernlighthouse.org/ptclass

LeeAnn's Story



Hi all. I'm LeeAnn, mother, wife and labor and delivery nurse. I had a gastric sleeve in May of 2019 and I am proud to tell you that I have lost 120 pounds since then (that's a whole person)! This was roughly 30 pounds more than my surgeon's goal. I chose to have the sleeve because I was in pain. I couldn't keep up with my children, I felt uncomfortable in front of my husband of 20 years, and I couldn't take care of my patients. I did not have prediabetes, high blood pressure, or any other comorbidities but I was morbidly obese and young with a severe food addiction. I needed to get my life back.

Has this been an easy process? Absolutely not. What I thought would be a straightforward process actually unearthed some health issues I didn't know I had. I had to push my surgery back seven months because I had to wear a BIPAP machine to get my oxygen levels back up in my blood for better healing. Was I unhappy about this? Yes. But I want to tell you to trust the process. I wore that machine every night and lost the weight the program required of me. With those life changes alone, I felt like a new person! You must do everything the surgeon and dietitian ask of you in order to have better healing and less chances of complications.

At this time, my weight loss honeymoon is over. I am maintaining my goal weight, but every day is a struggle. Physically I feel amazing but mentally is where I struggle. Dr. Toder reminds me, "You don't develop an eating habit overnight, it happened over 30+ years, so it is going to take time to overcome it." Boy is she right! I struggle with stress eating, boredom eating, and head hunger vs. physical hunger. Please be sure to use your resources and build up your support community to help you with this process. When I struggle, I call up Valerie (dietitian) or Nina (psychologist) and I talk it out; they are available to you. Luckily, I also have an amazing support group in my life, including my husband, my children, my work friends and my regular friends



along with the surgical weight loss team, I utilize each one of them. Make sure you do too. I also want to tell you that it is okay to not tell someone. I have very judgmental parents. To this day, they do not know I have had weight loss surgery. They have asked multiple times if I have ever had “that scary surgery to modify your stomach” and I never intend to tell them. They always get the answer of “diet, exercise, and a commitment to myself” which is not a lie, and I can easily live with this. I promise, you can too.



My weight fluctuates about 5-10 pounds depending on where my brain is. What I can tell you is, when I weigh my food and meal prep, I do the best and feel the best. I am out-hiking my children and great dane, I feel amazing around my husband, I can physically take care of my patients and I have more energy. I am happier. My teenage daughter says, “Mom, I’ve never seen you excited to do things.” I respond that I have always been bubbly and excited to do things. She then clarifies “I mean, you are so happy! I think that you’ve lost all this weight, so you aren’t hiding your true self anymore.” Talk about confirmation. Your true self is hiding too, let it out!



Let’s also talk about loose skin. I have it, but you know what? I wear it with pride. This skin has stretched to grow two beautiful children and a lot of unhealthy habits. It reminds me of where I was and where I am now. Clothes cover up what bothers me, and my husband thinks I’m soft and squishy, so I’ll keep it. This answer might not be for everyone, and that’s okay too. Do what’s right for you!

Was this the best decision ever? YES! If you are just beginning this journey, or even just toying around with the idea in your mind but are too embarrassed to take the leap yet, it’s okay. I was embarrassed too. I was more embarrassed of my size and outlook. I talked it over with my husband who said, “I’ve got your back.” I then looked at my doctor of 10+ years and burst into tears and sobbed uncontrollably while I tried to get the words out, “I want weight loss surgery.” She looked at me and said “Okay, what do I need to do?” It was the best support and confirmation I could have gotten. If you are in the middle of this process: measure, weigh, use your surgical weight loss team, use your other support teams, rid your life of negative people, and develop an exercise routine (walking works). Trust the process and yourself. Good luck to you all. Surgery is well worth it to get control of your life and live the best you.

Best wishes, LeeAnn, RN (Midwife in the making)