

## **Information for Prospective Patients**

### **Initial Consultation, Insurance Approvals, Fees and Support Groups**

Dear Prospective Patient:

Thank you for inquiring about weight loss surgery with Pacific Laparoscopy.

We understand the urgency that many people feel after finally deciding to go ahead with weight loss surgery. Insurance company processing of authorizations and thorough medical evaluations may take considerable time.

During this period, we encourage you, as well as any who will be supporting you through your surgery, to attend our monthly support group meetings. At these meetings you will meet people like yourself who are just beginning the process, as well as post operative patients and their support persons and, of course, members of our team who will help to make yours a successful journey back to good health.

This packet contains detailed information intended to help you through several of the components of the pre-operative process. These include:

- Initial Consultation Expectations
- Required Pre-Surgical Evaluations
- Insurance Approvals and Fees
- Out of Area Patients/Process
- Self-Pay Patients/Process
- Support Group Meetings

We look forward to meeting you and to helping you achieve your optimal health goals.

Sincerely,

PacLap Team

# PACIFIC LAPAROSCOPY

SURGERY FOR MORBID OBESITY  
ADVANCED LAPAROSCOPIC AND ENDOCRINE SURGERY

John M. Rabkin, MD, FACS

## **Initial Consultation Expectation**

We require an Initial Consultation to ensure that our patients understand all that is involved in choosing to have weight loss surgery with Pacific Laparoscopy. At the time of the initial consultation, we try to make certain that our patients:

- Are fully informed about the weight loss surgical procedures available to them;
- Have provided us with all of their health history and prior medical and psychological evaluations for review and discussion;
- Understand the financial and insurance issues involved in having surgery with us.

## Consultation Visit

Your initial office visit will take approximately 3 hours. We encourage you to bring a support person. The consultation fee is \$300.00 and must be paid at the time of your visit. If you proceed with surgery after your consult, the consultation fee of \$300 will be credited back to you.

Your initial office visit includes:

An education class

A medical consultation with the clinical staff and the surgeon

A meeting with our financial counselor

It is important that you come prepared for this 3-hour appointment and that we are prepared for you. Please bring or confirm in advance that we have received:

**Insurance Card**

We will need to make copies of both sides for our records

**Completed Health Questionnaire**

Forms can be downloaded from our website or mailed to you upon request

**History and Physical from your Primary Care Provider (if available)**

We can provide you with a request for medical clearance from your PCP

**Easily removable shoes/socks**

The Body Fat Analysis we calculate requires bare feet

## Rescheduling

Prompt accommodation of our prospective patients is an important goal. Out of consideration for others please notify the office at the earliest possible time for any reason you are not able to keep your consultation appointment.

## **Required Pre-surgical Evaluations**

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## Medical Evaluation:

We require a complete History and Physical, dictated with medical comorbidities, as a statement from your Primary Care Physician or specialist indicating that you have been cleared for surgery. This is also needed for pre-anesthesia clearance. A CBC and Chem 12 panel (within 6 months) is required, along with selected baseline Vitamin and Mineral levels. We can provide the lab order.

## Psychological Evaluation:

We require a psychological clearance prior to a weight loss surgical procedure.

We work with Dr. William Hartman who has extensive experience with our patients and the effects of surgical procedures for morbid obesity.

Your own psychologist/psychiatrist can provide the psychological evaluation after he/she speaks with Dr. Hartman (415) 674-5200.

## Subspecialty Evaluations:

Based on your medical history and clinical exam, you may be referred for a subspecialty evaluation, most commonly pulmonary or cardiac.

## **Out of Area Patients**

We have many patients who are not local to our San Francisco practice. In most circumstances, we are able to accommodate our out of area patients' Initial Consultations over the phone. This requires that the patient coordinate, complete and submit necessary evaluations in advance of our phone consultation. Should the patient decide to proceed with surgery, we require that the patient arrive in San Francisco for both the education class and a complete medical exam by the surgeon a few days before the scheduled surgery.

## Hospital Affiliations

Dr. Rabkin performs surgery at these hospitals in San Francisco, CA area.

St. Mary's Medical Center: 450 Stanyan Street San Francisco, CA 94117. (415) 668-1000

California Pacific Medical Center: 2333 Buchanan Street San Francisco, CA 94115. (415)600-6000

El Camino Hospital: 2500 Grant Road Mountain View, CA 94040. (650) 940-7000

These three hospitals are contracted with most major insurance companies. Our office will process and submit an authorization request for your surgery. Typically, if you are denied for the surgery, you will be denied for the hospital coverage.

## **Insurance Approval and Fees**

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We are not contracted with any insurance company. Our fees must be paid prior to scheduling surgery, in most cases. Depending upon your insurance carrier, you may not be required to pay the entire fee in advance of your surgery. As a courtesy, we will bill our fees to your insurance company if they have authorized your surgery. Our financial counselor will assist you in this process.

If your procedure is approved by your insurance and our office receives insurance payments for our fees for your surgery which exceed the total remaining balance due on your account, the overage will be reimbursed to you after the insurance check(s) is/are received in our office. If any portion of our fees for your surgery remains unpaid after your insurance has issued their payment(s) for our fees, you will be responsible for paying the balance.

## Surgical Fees

- Duodenal Switch (DS)

Our total surgeon's and assistant surgeon's fee for the Duodenal Switch is \$12,600. This amount includes 3 months of follow-up appointments with our medical staff. Please note that hospital fee and any other professional fees are separate and are not included in the above fee.

For a self-paying patient, the full \$12,600.00 surgeon's and assistant surgeon's fees and the \$1,500.00 anesthesiologist's fee are due at the time of surgery scheduling. Please note that the hospital fee and any other professional fees are separate and are not included in the above fee. Please contact our financial counselor for more information.

- Vertical Gastrectomy (VG):

Our total surgeon's and assistant surgeon's fee for the Vertical Gastrectomy is \$6,400.00. This amount includes 3 months of follow-up appointments with our medical staff. Please note that the hospital fee and any other professional fee are separate and are not included in the above fee.

For a self-paying patient, the full \$6,400.00 surgeon's and assistant surgeon's fee and the \$1,100.00 anesthesiologist's fee are due at the time of surgery scheduling. Please note that hospital fee and any other professional fee are separate and are not included in the above fee. Please contact our financial counselor for more information.

- Conversion to the Duodenal Switch (DSC):

Our total surgeon's and assistant surgeon's fee for the conversion of your previous bariatric surgery to the Duodenal Switch procedure is \$16,500.00. This amount includes 3 months of follow-up appointments with our medical staff. Please note that hospital fee are separate and are not included in the above fee.

For a self-paying patient, the full \$16,500.00 surgeon's and assistant surgeon's fee and the \$1,500.00 anesthesiologist's fee are due at the time of surgery scheduling. Please note that hospital fee are separate and are not included in the above fee. Please contact our financial counselor for more information.

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## **Scheduling Surgery**

Self-paying patients are usually scheduled for surgery as soon as the patient has had his/her consultation with our medical staff and has paid our surgeon's and assistant surgeon's fee as well as the anesthesiologist's fee. This often happens as quickly as 1 to 2 weeks from the date of the initial consultation. Please note all medical clearances will need to be received before proceeding with surgery. (Please refer to Required Pre-surgical Evaluation on page 3.)

Patients who wish to go through their insurance for the surgery are scheduled as soon as insurance authorization is received and any prepayment of our fees is received in our office. Please note all medical clearances will need to be received before proceeding with surgery. (Please refer to Required Pre-surgical Evaluation on page 3.)

## **Support Group Meetings**

Our San Francisco support group meets on second Wednesday of each month from 6-8 pm. (Informational Seminar starts at 6 PM and is followed by both pre-op and post-op meeting at 7 PM.) Meeting location is St Mary's Cafeteria 450 Stanyan Street San Francisco, CA 94117.

We also hold meetings in various locations. Please call our office for the most updated information regarding meetings time and locations.