



INOVA FAIR OAKS HOSPITAL

# INhealth

## SLIMMING SOLUTIONS

Inova offers strategies for effective, permanent weight loss

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# SLIMMING SOLUTIONS

Individualized strategies for effective, permanent weight loss

**We know by now that obesity is much** more than an appearance issue. More than two-thirds of Americans are overweight, putting them at risk for serious health conditions including heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, gallstones, breathing problems, high cholesterol and certain cancers.

“Obesity significantly affects your health,” notes Kajal Zalavadia, MD, an internist and board-certified obesity medicine physician at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital. “It is so great when we see people achieve better health and overcome a condition rather than just continuing to control it.”

If you're concerned about your weight, but you're wondering how to shed those extra pounds and keep them off, the team of professionals at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital can help. The nationally recognized group of board-certified physicians, registered dietitians, exercise specialists, specialized counselors and certified nurses are there to carefully assess your weight-loss goals and create a personalized plan to help you meet your goals safely and effectively.

## NON-SURGICAL APPROACH

One weight-loss option at the hospital to explore is the Medical Weight Loss Program, a 12-week program that includes consultations with a physician, weekly educational classes, nutrition counseling and workouts with an exercise specialist.

For Scott Robohn, 47, Inova's Medical

Weight Loss Program provided the structure and motivational support he needed to accomplish his weight-loss goals. Before joining, the 6' 5" engineering manager weighed 380 pounds. He had high blood pressure, constant fatigue and his hips ached. Simple tasks like getting dressed to go to work or walking from his car to the office had become daunting tasks.

For three years, Robohn had tried to shed pounds through Weight Watchers online and other programs, but every time he lost 15 or 20 pounds, he would gain it back — and then some. Then

*In just seven months, he lost 155 lbs. His blood pressure returned to normal and his energy skyrocketed.*

last February, with encouragement from his wife, the father of four knew it was time for a change.

“I picked the Inova Medical Weight Loss Program because it offered what I felt I needed and that was essentially a reboot of my eating habits,” he recalls.

The program, thanks to the motivation of Dr. Zalavadia and other weight-loss patients, worked. In just seven months, he lost 155 pounds. His blood pressure returned to normal and his energy skyrocketed. His success inspired those around him, including two friends who joined the Inova program.

These days, Robohn walks between seven and 12 miles a day, wearing a pedometer to track his steps. “I have the happiest dog in Fairfax



Scott Robohn walks to stay in shape and uses his weight-loss experience to inspire other people.

County,” he laughs, indicating he couldn't be more pleased. “It's a major lifestyle change that has impacted me positively in just about every way.”

## BARIATRIC SERVICES

For those who have tried numerous weight-loss therapies such as diet, exercise and medications, and haven't found lasting success, doctors may recommend bariatric surgery. Weight-loss surgery is an option for individuals who are 100 pounds over their ideal body weight, have a BMI of over 40, or have a BMI of 35 and one or more serious health conditions related to obesity.

The Inova Weight Loss Surgery Program, a Center of Excellence for Bariatric Surgery, is nationally recognized for its expertise and personalized care.

"We're a very mature program," says Matthew Fitzer, MD, a bariatric surgeon at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital. "Inova has done over 7,000 surgeries and that experience has a tremendous effect on surgical outcomes."

For 41-year-old Melanie Beasley, the program at Inova helped her realize a weight-loss goal she thought she would never achieve. From the age of 17, the Sterling resident had tried numerous weight-loss programs, diet pills and food and calorie restrictions. But nothing worked. By the time Beasley saw Dr. Fitzer, the 5'5" Internet engineer weighed 266 pounds and her BMI was 41. Although she was very active, she suffered from obesity-related pain in her knees and her right foot and climbing stairs left her winded.

Last March, on the recommendation of friends who had undergone weight-loss surgery at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, Beasley had laparoscopic gastric bypass surgery. This minimally invasive procedure decreases stomach size, allowing you to feel full faster. Beasley met with Dr. Fitzer who

explained the procedure in great detail and answered all of her questions about what to expect during and after the procedure. The road ahead would be challenging, but Beasley found the support she needed.

"Dr. Fitzer is just amazing," says Beasley. "He has tremendous bedside manner and his staff has been fantastic with helping me out and answering my questions and concerns."

Beasley lost 91 pounds in the seven months since her surgery. She has dropped three shirt sizes and five pant

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sizes. Her foot and knee pain are gone and she can bike 20 miles or walk five miles without getting winded.

"I'm wildly ecstatic!" she says. "This is the best thing that ever happened to me. The clothes sizes are fun and my self-confidence has never been so high. Now I can jog up two flights of stairs with a fully loaded laundry basket and not break a sweat. The changes are mind-blowing."

Melanie Beasley enjoys shopping for clothes more now after undergoing weight-loss surgery.



## Ask the Expert

HOW DOES YOUR WEIGHT AFFECT YOUR HEALTH?



Join Kajal Zalavadia, MD, for a FREE lecture, "How Does Your Weight Affect Your Health?" It will be held Thursday, Jan. 23, at 7 p.m. at Gum Spring Library, 24600 Millstream Drive, Aldie, VA. To sign up, visit [inova.org/AskTheExpert](http://inova.org/AskTheExpert) or call 1.855.My.Inova (1.855.694.6682).

## GAINING GROUND

For more information about Inova Weight Loss Services or to register for a free informational seminar, call 703.348.4716 or visit [inovaweightloss.org](http://inovaweightloss.org).