



**Katie Simmons before and after losing 130 pounds with gastric bypass surgery. Simmons is now a personal trainer and helps others reach their fitness goals.**

## Small Stature, Big Personality

**By Katie Simmons**  
**Gastric Bypass Surgery Patient**

■ How is it possible that the girl standing just 4 feet, 11 inches tall was always the “big girl?” Throughout my life, I was big in both size and personality. I was the life of the party, always able to draw attention away from my size with my smile, laugh, and silly nature. But people who really knew me, such as my husband, knew that I was sad and upset by my physical state. I was wearing my weight like a bad outfit from the 1980s. I couldn’t take it off, I was always seen in it, but I longed to change it. I longed to be the woman I am now.

I honestly didn’t research all the types of weight-loss surgery available. I didn’t read hundreds of testimonies about the good and bad of aspects of surgery. I did, however, listen to the team at Memorial Health Bariatrics. They made me feel confident. They answered my questions. They became my friends and biggest supporters.

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## Support Group Meetings

Pre- and post-op support group meetings are held on the first Thursday and third Wednesday of every month in the Medical Education Auditorium at Memorial University Medical Center.

6 p.m., Thursday, July 2  
carbohydrates, fiber, and protein discussion with Helen Hussey, R.D.

7 p.m., Wednesday, July 15  
bands back on track discuss with Jody Hannah, P.A.

6 p.m., Thursday, August 6  
behavior modification

7 p.m., Wednesday, August 19  
metabolic magic

6 p.m., Thursday, September 3  
behavior modification discussion with Helen Hussey, R.D.

7 p.m., Wednesday, September 16  
protein tasting, bring your favorite dish

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## Know When to Call Your Doctor After Surgery

By Ashley Andrews, R.N.  
Memorial Health Bariatrics

■ In any medical procedure, complications can occur. It's important for you to be aware of these complications and get medical attention if necessary. Below are some conditions that you should not ignore.

### Vomiting

Please note that vomiting is never normal with any weight-loss procedure. Please call our office if you experience vomiting or spitting up of food.

### Bypass and Sleeve

After a gastric bypass or sleeve procedure, vomiting can occur if you eat too quickly, take bites that are too big, or eat foods that are not moist enough. This is your body's way of telling you to change those eating habits. Do not simply continue your eating/purging cycle. Vomiting because of improper eating should rarely occur. If it happens more than once or twice a year, we need to assess you in our office. Remember that your body only has three-day stores of vitamin B1 (thiamine). Frequent vomiting can deplete these stores and may lead to irreversible nerve damage.

### Band

Vomiting with the lap band can lead to a slipped band and decreased vitamin levels. If you find that you can tolerate food one day, but vomit when you eat the next day, your band is probably too tight. Your stomach becomes irritated and swollen and you must come to our office to have fluid removed from your band. A slipped band can lead to emergency surgery or necrosis of your stomach.

### Pain

If you experience pain after eating, please call our office. Many times, a piece of food is simply stuck. However, there are other causes of pain just below your breast-bone that can indicate more serious problems such as ulcers, prolapsed bands, internal hernias, etc. We need to evaluate any abdominal pain you may experience.

### Nausea

Nausea is not a normal feeling and should not occur daily. Decreased vitamin or electrolyte levels can cause nausea. Nausea can also occur from overeating, eating too quickly, taking bites that are too big, eating sugar, or not drinking enough fluids. We will help you work through any issues you may be experiencing so that you no longer feel nauseous.

After surgery, you should progressively feel better each day, not worse. If you experience something that just does not feel right, please contact us right away. 📞

## Cook for a Good Cause



■ Here is an opportunity to showcase your culinary skills and help others at the same time. The Ronald McDonald House on the Memorial University Medical Center (MUMC) campus is looking for volunteer cooks to help provide meals for families staying at the house. The Ronald McDonald House provides lodging for families who have children hospitalized in the George and Marie Backus Children's Hospital at MUMC. These families live far away and need a place to stay while their children receive treatment. Home-cooked meals can certainly brighten their day. You can share a healthy bariatric meal or make an old favorite recipe that you no longer eat. For more information, please contact Betty Curto at 350-3495 or [curtobe1@memorialhealth.com](mailto:curtobe1@memorialhealth.com). 📞

Sugar and carbs had been my downfall. I needed a weight-loss solution that would not give me the option of eating poorly. Gastric bypass surgery was my only option. I now eat to live, to fuel my body to perform the tasks I want to achieve. With the support of the team at Memorial Health Bariatrics, I continue to help myself and others.

Since having gastric bypass surgery in September 2007, I have lost 130 pounds. I have gone from a size 22 to a size 2. I shop for my workout clothes in the children's section. I have changed my life from living on the sidelines, watching and wishing to participate, to making physical fitness my life. I even decided to become a personal trainer so I could help others make the leap into fitness. I became a certified personal trainer in December 2008. Fitness is so important and I know that I could not have achieved my goals in 16 months without my daily exercise and strength training. I now work to help others change their lives.

My biggest pet peeve is when people assume that if you undergo weight loss surgery, you take the easy way out. That's not true at all. The surgery and lifestyle changes that go with it are very difficult. I've had to change everything I did in the past and become a new person. I will always be different, but that makes me special and unique. I love being exactly who I am now. The only big thing about me now is my personality, and that will never change. 🌸

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## Upcoming Classes

■ Anisa Grantham will teach the following classes this summer and fall. Grantham is a certified counselor and bariatric surgery patient. Call 826-0918 to register for the following classes.

### Success Habits Workshops

**August 8, September 12, October 10, November 14, and December 12**

Each workshop lasts from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

613 Towne Park Drive West, Suite 103, Rincon, GA 31326

The location may change depending on the number of patients enrolled.

### Back on Track Classes

**September 14, 21, and 28**

**October 5, 12, and 19**

This class meets from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on September 14, and then from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. for the next five sessions.

613 Towne Park Drive West, Suite 103, Rincon, GA 31326

The location may change depending on the number of patients enrolled. 🌸

**6 p.m., Thursday, October 1**  
skin care with Kimberly Reeder-Fields

**7 p.m., Wednesday, October 21**  
discussion with John Angstadt, M.D.,  
bariatric surgeon

### Information Sessions

6 p.m., every Wednesday

### B-12 Injections and Weigh-Ins

Call 350-3438 to schedule an appointment.

For more information about any of our events, go to [bariatrics.memorial-health.com](http://bariatrics.memorial-health.com) and click on "Events." 🌸

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## Featured Recipes

■ These recipes were provided by Helen Hussey, R.D., the dietitian at Memorial Health Bariatrics.

### Cilantro-Lime Chicken with Avocado Salsa

Serving size: 1 chicken breast and 1/4 cup salsa = 289 calories; 13.2 grams fat; 6.6 grams carbs; 35.6 grams protein; 3.6 grams fiber; 383 milligrams sodium.

### Chicken

2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro  
2 1/2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil  
4 (6 oz.) skinless, boneless chicken breast halves  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
Cooking spray

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## **Salsa**

- 1 cup chopped plum tomato (about 2)
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 avocado, peeled and chopped

Pound chicken with meat mallet to tenderize it if desired. Combine first three ingredients in a large bowl. Add chicken and toss to marinade. Let stand for three minutes. Remove chicken from marinade. Discard marinade and sprinkle chicken evenly with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Heat grill pan over medium-high heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add chicken to pan; cook six minutes on each side or until done.

For the salsa, combine tomato, onion, lime juice, and salt in a medium bowl. Add avocado and stir gently to combine. Serve salsa over chicken.

## **Chicken and Feta Tabbouleh**

Serving size: 1/2 cup = 98 calories; 3.1 grams fat; 7 grams carbs; 9.4 grams protein; 2.1g fiber; 114 milligrams sodium.

- 3/4 cup uncooked bulgur
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 cups chopped skinless, boneless cooked chicken breast
- 1 cup chopped plum tomato
- 1 cup chopped English cucumber
- 3/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/3 cup chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped mint
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Place bulgur in a medium bowl and cover with 1 cup boiling water. Let stand 15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Combine chicken and remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Add bulgur to chicken mixture; toss gently to combine. 🌿