

GBMC

Patient Questionnaire

Patient Name: Sandra M.

1. What brought you to GBMC?

I had always thought about having the surgery, I was over weight most of my adult life. I had looked into having the surgery a few years before but our insurance wouldn't cover it. A few years after that my husband changed jobs, and friends of mine called me and told me she was going to GBMC to have the procedure done. I looked into my new insurance and found coverage to begin my journey to become a new me. After seeing how well my friend looked after her surgery and hearing her tell me how much better she felt – I went to the informational meeting.

2. Please briefly share your experience at GBMC, including what unit(s) you were treated on.

I first did the 6 months with COMP, seeing the nutritionist, and Dr. Moen. My surgery was performed on July 6, 2007. I was on the regular post surgery floor. After feeling very tired and weak I was transferred to the ICU, for a blood transfusion. I had bled into my bowel, and needed 5 pints of blood. After which I felt much better and was transferred back to the normal post-op floor. Even after having the small setback I knew this was the best decision of my life. I lost 19 pounds in the first week and since have lost over 100 pounds since my heaviest weight of 294.5 pounds. Being more then a year post-op, I have a few more pounds to lose – but feel great and I am the healthiest I have been since I was a teenager!!

3. How has your experience changed your or your family's life?

Our lives have changed so much, and not just mine. We do so much more as a family then we did before. Walking, riding bikes, going out. Even in simple things, like we park in the farthest spot in the parking lot so we can walk more as we go into stores. We go to theme parks, before I was afraid I wouldn't fit into the seat of our favorite rides, now we all ride together and have so much fun. My kids say they love "skinny mommy" because she plays more and looks better. (They are so funny) My husband, who NEVER ate many vegetables before, now is more willing to eat salads and some steamed veggies. All our lives are better now – and if given the chance to do it all again – I would do it all again.

4. Are there any particular staff (doctor, nurses, other clinicians) that you were particularly impressed with, and if so, why?

The entire staff was sweet and kind to me. Dr. Moen is an amazing surgeon who is very thorough. During some of my tests he found that there was a mass on my liver, and he made sure that all the testing was done to rule out cancer and even called me on the weekend to give me the good news that it wasn't cancer. Everyone was willing to answer our questions anytime we had one.

5. Would you recommend GBMC to family and friends, and if so, why?

I have recommended this surgery to many people. A friend of my daughter's had the surgery in April at GBMC and so did another friend, although her insurance made her go to another hospital. I love telling people about my experience, even with my little setback I tell them it was the best thing I could have ever done for my health and life.

6. Please tell us a bit about your personal story before you received treatment.

Many of my family members are over weight. I was obese most of my adult life. After I had children, I gained even more weight. My husband is very athletic and loves to get out and go. When we dated we used to do lots of things like rock climbing and volleyball. The more weight I gained the more self conscious I became, so I found myself not wanting to do the things we did before, which only added to the problem. I tried every diet known to man, Slim Fast, Weight Watchers, South Beach, Adkins, all of which worked for a little while – then I would gain back everything I lost and then some. I just wanted to be able to keep up with my active children and husband, and to prevent any medical issues that were very likely to occur due to family history and my weight. Diabetes, heart problems, and I was already having joint and back pain. I felt hopeless and didn't know what else to do.

7. Where are you now? Have you completed treatment or are you still receiving treatment?

It has been one year and almost 4 months since my surgery. As I said before I have a few more pounds to lose, but I am thrilled by the results. This life changing surgery has taught me so much about myself. I used to be quiet and reserved, now I love to go out and have fun, and I'm not worried about being taunted by others if I go out with friends, which often happened while I was out. I want everyone who has ever felt badly about the way they look or feel to know how great it feels to be healthy.