



JULY 2007 • 440 POUNDS



MARCH 2008 • 100 POUNDS LOST AND COUNTING



FEBRUARY 2009 • 260 POUNDS

Less than a year after bariatric surgery, Darrell Hesse has already lost more than 180 pounds. His weight loss has made it possible for him to tackle items on his “bucket list” such as riding a bike, getting his principal certification and wearing a belt made by his grandfather.

When Dieting Isn't Enough

Weight-loss surgery can help take the excess pounds off—for good

Darrell Hesse, 48, of Waxahachie, started to struggle with his weight after he graduated from high school and moved out on his own. “I felt like I had license to eat what I wanted, when I wanted, as much as I wanted. I didn’t have my parents watching over me,” he says.

By 1995 he was diagnosed with diabetes and sleep apnea. His doctor suggested weight-loss surgery in 2000 but Hesse refused, determined to lose the weight on his own. Despite some success—even a 150-pound drop in six months at one point—he always gained the weight back.

His weight peaked at 488 pounds, and his doctor convinced him that the risks of weight-loss surgery were lower than the risks of continuing to live with his excess weight and the medical problems that came with it.

Hesse’s surgery was performed in July 2007, and 11 weeks later his weight was down 110 pounds. A year after the operation he weighed in the 240s, just 20 or 30 pounds above his ideal weight.

Weight-loss surgery isn’t a magic fix—diet and exercise work with the operation to take off the pounds. But for Hesse, exercise was part of the fun. “I had always wanted to get back on a bicycle, so when my weight dropped to around 250 pounds I went out and bought a bike. It’s been great to do stuff I haven’t done in decades,” he says.

Renee O’Daniel, clinical manager of the Weight Management and Surgical Weight Loss Center at Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie, knows the struggles people face when they undergo bariatric surgery firsthand—she had the surgery herself four years ago. “You can’t expect surgery to cure you, but if you take responsibility and want to change, it can work. I know—it changed my life,” she says. ● *By Stephanie Thurrott*

Why Wait to Lose the Weight?

Hear Darrell tell his story and find out more about surgical weight loss at Baylor Waxahachie at BaylorHealth.com/WeightLossWax.

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