The Bariatric Beat at Regional West

October 2026



Special Announcements

Education Seminar

You can discover all you need to know about stapling bariatric procedures through our free education seminar. Scan the QR code or visit RWMCWeightLossOptions.com to register.

SCAN ME

Successes and Program Updates



We're excited to congratulate Darren West, Courtney Pilger, and Debra Grant on losing 100 lbs. and counting. Debra and Darren achieved incredible weight loss through lap band procedures, and Courtney has earned a new lifestyle through gastric sleeve surgery. We are proud of the work these three have done and continue to do. Great job!

Upcoming Events:

In-Person Support Group

Nov. 4, 2026
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Regional West Medical Plaza South, Conference Room 1

Equipping People with Realistic Holiday Strategies and Gratitude-Based Mindset Reinforcement

Dec. 2, 2026
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Regional West Medical Plaza South, Conference Room 1

Reviewing 2026, Patient Successes, and Reinforcing the Value of Ongoing Support Engagement

Coordinator's Corner

This month, become curious about your nighttime eating patterns instead of judging them. Your Challenge: For seven evenings, practice these five steps:

1. Record the time: When does your nighttime craving appear?
2. Rate your hunger: Use a scale of one to 10, with one being not hungry and 10 being extremely hungry.
3. Identify your trigger: Are you experiencing stress, boredom, fatigue, habit, or physical hunger?
4. Review your day: Did you eat adequate protein, follow your meal plan, stay hydrated, and get enough sleep?

Your SMART Goal: Over the next seven days, track nighttime cravings on at least five evenings, identify one recurring trigger, and practice one healthier response.

Success isn't measured by having zero cravings. It's measured by understanding your behaviors and making intentional choices.

Regional West
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Ask the Expert

When the Kitchen Calls After Dark

At our October Bariatric Support Group, we explored an important question: **Why do cravings seem stronger at night?**

Using Kate Rivard's *Late Night Food Cravings* as our educational foundation, we discussed three important influences on nighttime eating: physical hunger versus emotional cravings, the effects of sleep and stress, and how our daytime nutrition choices influence evening hunger.

We learned that not every craving means our bodies need food. Sometimes we eat because we're tired, stressed, bored, or following familiar routines. Other times, inadequate nutrition throughout the day leaves us genuinely hungry at night.

One important takeaway was learning to pause and identify what our bodies are communicating rather than responding automatically.

For bariatric patients, understanding these patterns is an important part of long-term weight management. Surgery is a powerful treatment, but continued education, self-awareness, and support help us navigate life beyond surgery.

You don't have to navigate these challenges alone!

Join us at our monthly Bariatric Support Group, held the **first Wednesday of every month from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.** Whether you're preparing for surgery, newly post-operative, or years into your journey, your experiences and questions matter. Everyone is welcome. Come learn, connect, and grow with us!

Remember: Progress begins with awareness, not perfection. Every time you pause to understand a craving, you're building a healthier relationship with food.

Warmest regards,
Amber Schulze, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, CBC, Bariatric Coordinator



Health Tips

Five Foundations for Managing Obesity-Related Disease

1. Fuel your body throughout the day — Skipping meals or eating too little protein can contribute to evening hunger. Follow your bariatric meal plan, prioritize protein, and avoid saving most of your food for nighttime.
2. Pause before you snack — Ask yourself: "Am I physically hungry, emotionally overwhelmed, bored, or simply following a routine?" Identifying the reason behind a craving helps you choose your next step.
3. Create a new evening routine — Replace automatic snacking with a relaxing activity, such as reading, stretching, journaling, or taking a short walk. Building new routines can help break the connection between nighttime and unnecessary eating.
4. Protect your sleep — Inadequate sleep can increase hunger and food cravings. Develop a consistent bedtime routine, limit evening screen time, and address ongoing sleep difficulties.
5. Plan, don't graze – If you are genuinely hungry, choose a planned, protein-focused snack appropriate for your bariatric diet stage. Eat mindfully rather than repeatedly grazing throughout the evening.

Dietitian's Corner by Amber

Cinnamon-Spiced Apple Crisp with Oats

- 2 large apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- ½ tsp. cinnamon

Topping:

- ½ c. rolled oats
- 1 Tbsp. chopped nuts (walnuts or almonds)
- 1 tsp. maple syrup or honey
- Pinch of cinnamon



Preheat your oven to 350 F. Toss apples with lemon juice and cinnamon; place in a small baking dish. Mix oats, nuts, sweetener, and cinnamon in a bowl. Sprinkle over apples. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until apples are soft and topping is golden.