



Amy Paulus, FNP-BC, is a board-certified family nurse practitioner for Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital's Weight Management and Bariatrics Program.

## Tried and Failed to Lose Weight?

YOUR BODY MAY BE WORKING AGAINST YOU

**I**N A PERFECT WORLD, shedding extra pounds would come down to the simple balance of calories in and calories out. The reality is that there are a host of contributing factors we have to take into account and address to generate lasting weight loss.

While crash diets might produce short term results, in the long-term, they can have a negative impact on your body's ability to burn calories—your metabolism. It's one of the reasons that it's so hard to lose weight.

When you dramatically reduce or restrict the calories your body has to use, it responds by lowering your metabolic rate, slowing your metabolism, and reducing the number of calories

you burn during your day-to-day activities. Often, people who are overweight or obese have a very low metabolic rate, which makes it harder for them to shed the extra pounds, even if they are working out regularly.

Take one of my patients, Ray, for example. Ray is an avid recreational athlete who, despite a rigorous routine of weightlifting, spinning, and 20-30-mile bike rides, continued to pack on the pounds as he aged. In his mid-fifties, when the scale hit more than 270 pounds, he asked for help.

Together, we discovered that Ray's biggest challenge, apart from portion control, was finding the right balance of macronutrients—carbs, proteins, and fats—he was eating. Using an app,

connected devices, and regular check-ins, we were able to help Ray understand how to fuel his body for his weight loss and athletic goals, and keep him accountable.

### A SUCCESS STORY

Six months and more than 60 pounds later, Ray is back to his college weight and feeling better than ever. He's sleeping better. His blood pressure is down. His joints don't hurt and he's more flexible. He's moving faster during his workouts. Importantly, his weight loss has eliminated the need for three of the prescription medications he was taking.

Ray worked hard. He followed the plan we




As part of Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital's Weight Management and Bariatrics Program, Ray Houle lost more than 60 pounds in six months (July 2021-December 2021).

created for him, and he saw incredible results. But, Ray and I know that his weight loss journey isn't over. To maintain his weight loss, he'll need to continue to work hard.

The reality is that our bodies are always seeking to get back to what they see as normal, even if our normal is overweight. That's why as we lose weight, our metabolic rate goes down, too. This can be complicated by a history of chronic, unsustainable, and restrictive dieting which may have impacted your metabolism.

### A JUDGEMENT-FREE APPROACH

Our weight management program can help equip you with the tools to manage any impact on your metabolic rate and continue to achieve your weight loss goals. Every single plan is unique and tailored to each individual patient, whether they are seeking nutrition counselling or bariatric surgery and support. We start with a complete health history, and we go from there, judgement-free.

For anyone trying to lose weight, my advice is to never give up and don't beat yourself up. Obesity and excess weight are a chronic disease that you have to continue to work on and to treat with improved habits for long-term success. It takes time, and it's not a short-term fix, but it is so worth it. Just ask Ray. 

*Amy Paulus, FNP-BC is a board-certified family nurse practitioner, weight management advanced practice nurse, and bariatric coordinator for Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital's Weight Management and Bariatrics Program. With access to a combination of tools, such as nutritional counseling, physical activity, medication therapy, and behavioral coaching, Amy works with her patients to build a personalized, comprehensive weight loss plan based on an individual's goals, lifestyle, health and medical history. Learn more about the weight management and bariatric surgery options available at Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital by calling 847-620-3893.*



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