

Patient testimonials

Weight loss surgery gave Michael a new zest for life

Losing more than 100 pounds has made Michael feel like a whole new person—and a healthier one, too.



The best part of Michael's post-surgery weight loss? He no longer needs multiple medications.

Growing up in a restaurant family, Michael Mancuso started working around food young. While his customers might be eating at 7pm, he wolfed down food late at night, after the crowd died down. That unhealthy pattern continued after he got married and became a father—his family often ate fast food and takeout. Michael, now 44 and living in Glen Cove, NY, went from being a big kid to an obese man. At 350 pounds, he suffered numerous health problems, and took many medications.

"I took three blood pressure medications, one diabetes medication, meds for acid reflux, allergies and others," Michael said. "Refilling prescriptions was a full-time job."

That round robin of refills wasn't the only thing keeping him from enjoying life. He could only play with his children, now 10 and 8, for a few minutes before tiring. He dreaded clothes shopping, since only a few stores carried his size. One Christmas, he decided to treat himself to a pricey down jacket. "I special-ordered the biggest size they make and it was too tight. I put it in the back of the closet, like every heavy person does."

Over the years, Michael tried to lose weight. "I drank weight-loss shakes, did meal replacements and tried medicine, but nothing worked for long," he said. After his friend had weight-loss surgery at [North Shore University Hospital](#), Michael thought about the possibility of doing it for himself for years, but he never followed through.

Eventually, though, Michael made the call. He met with bariatric surgeon [Andrea Bedrosian, MD](#), and he's glad he did. "Dr. Bedrosian is one of the most kind and gentle individuals I've ever met," he said. Unlike other medical professionals he'd encountered, who judged him for his size, "The first time I met her, she asked, 'What's been going on in your life that would've caused you to neglect your health?'" When he mentioned wanting to fit into his fancy jacket, they both laughed.

Dr. Bedrosian proposed [gastric sleeve surgery](#)—a procedure that involves removing a significant portion of the stomach. To prepare, Michael began having monthly visits with Dr. Bedrosian and met with a range of medical specialists, and a nutritionist for tests and counseling. Surgery, originally scheduled for April 2020, had to be postponed due to the pandemic, but Michael persevered. During the lockdown, he continued telehealth visits and, with his restaurant shuttered, spent time following the nutritionist's advice to focus on protein first for meals, then veggies and carbs, only if he was still hungry. He began to experiment as he cooked for his family. "I tried cauliflower

Meet our doctor



Andrea Bedrosian, MD

Learn more

[Gastric sleeve surgery](#)

[Bariatric surgery](#)

[North Shore University Hospital](#)

Related testimonials

[A heartfelt tribute: Musician Keith gives back to the cardiac team that saved his life](#)

[Lifesaving heart surgery gave this lifelong teacher a second chance](#)

crust on pizza, which is a staple in my family. Now everything has a cauliflower crust!"



These days, Michael cooks healthy meals for himself and his family.

Michael's surgery took place a few months later. Thanks to his lockdown efforts and a two-week, pre-surgery liquid diet prescribed by his doctor, he went into it about 30 pounds lighter. Although he couldn't have visitors, he wasn't alone. "It was like I had my own personal staff," he said. "I know they were in charge of the whole area, but it felt like they were always with me." He spent just 24 hours in the hospital, and within a week, he'd lost another 20 pounds.

Over the following months, Dr. Bedrosian's staff worked with Michael to help him relearn how to eat after the procedure. He found it best to take just a few bites and move on, since eating too much would make him uncomfortable. He's never without a water bottle, as hydration is key.

One year later, Michael is down to 199 pounds. He no longer needs his old medications. Longtime friends hardly recognize him. He no longer struggles to get in and out of his car. And he goes biking and swimming with his family.



Being active—playing games, goofing with his kids in the pool—is a source of pleasure for Michael.

"Now I can throw my kids in the pool, jump off the diving board and swim laps," he said. And he sees a change in his children, too. "I feel like my kids are 1,000% healthier because we cook at home. It used to be chicken fingers and French fries, and now they eat shrimp and vegetables."

At his most recent follow-up appointment, Dr. Bedrosian asked him about that too-small jacket. "I started to cry a little. She must have had hundreds of patients and she remembered that," he said. "My answer to her: It's too big."

Next steps and useful resources

- Get started on your weight loss journey. [Register for our online seminar.](#)
- [Schedule an appointment](#) with a bariatric surgeon at North Shore University Hospital.