

# MERITUS BARIATRIC SURGICAL SPECIALISTS HELP PATIENT GET HER HEALTH BACK

Kristen Fultz found herself on heart medication and having to use a CPAP to treat newly diagnosed sleep apnea.

The culprit: medication she'd been prescribed caused her to gain 100 pounds in two months.

Thanks to help from Meritus Bariatric Surgical Specialists, the mother of four was able to not only lose the weight, but she was taken off the heart medication and no longer needs a CPAP.

"I have energy. I felt completely better afterward," she said of the sleeve gastrectomy she underwent at Meritus. "It was a big change."

The Cascade, Maryland, resident tried different methods to lose the weight to get back to around 160 pounds.

"Every diet I tried wouldn't do anything," she said. "I never had a weight issue. All of a sudden, I did from a medication. Then it caused me some serious health issues."

Kristen started the process for sleeve gastrectomy in late 2021.

In a sleeve gastrectomy, often just called "the sleeve," the stomach is surgically reduced in size. With the stomach holding less food and liquid, the number of calories consumed decreases.

The surgery also removes the part of the stomach that produces the hormone that makes you feel hungry, having an effect on metabolism. It decreases feelings of hunger and increases feelings of fullness.

But surgery is only part of it.

Typically, it takes between six and nine months to go through the program before surgery. It includes a dietitian-supervised diet program, undergoing a psychological examination, and a nutrition evaluation among other steps.

"Meritus Bariatric Surgical Specialists wants to ensure our patients can safely and effectively realize their health goals," said Dr. Brian Cantor, M.D., with the specialist group. "Collaboration with our patients is critical before and after surgery to help ensure that they achieve optimal weight loss and improvement in their medical conditions."

After successfully completing the pre-surgery phase, Kristen had her procedure at Meritus Medical Center in June 2022.

The procedure was minimally invasive and she stayed in the hospital overnight and then recovered at home.

As the weeks progressed after her surgery, Kristen's body became more accustomed to her smaller stomach and she was able to go from liquids to more solid food.

By about six weeks, she was eating regular food again, albeit in smaller portions and based on a diet plan.

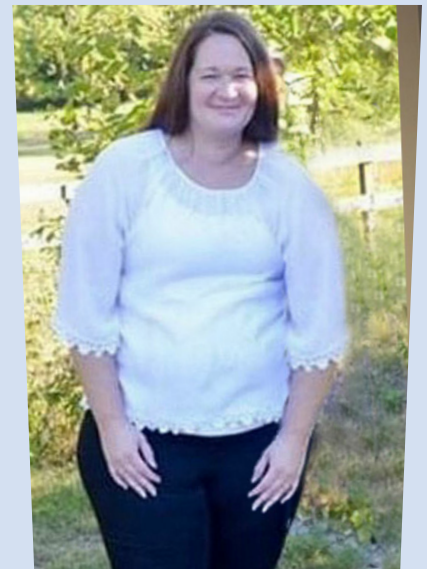
Along with the sleeve, Kristen chose to get a panniculectomy through Meritus Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery. The procedure removes excess skin caused by the rapid decrease in weight.

The process was much like a c-section, Kristen said. Recovery lasted about six weeks.

Kristen said the results of both surgeries were worth it almost two years later.

Would she do it all over again?

"I most definitely would," she said.



Before



After



**Bariatric Surgical  
Specialists**