



**KENTUCKY
BARIATRIC
INSTITUTE**

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

Message from Dr. Smith



As we welcome the spring season, I want to thank our patients, staff, and community for trusting Kentucky Bariatric Institute to be part of your health journey. Every day, we are inspired by the dedication and determination of those

taking steps toward healthier lives, and it is an honor to support you along the way.

Spring is a time of renewal and growth, and we encourage our patients to continue building healthy habits that support long-term success. Whether you are just beginning your weight loss journey or celebrating milestones along the way, remember that every positive step forward matters and contributes to a healthier future.

At Kentucky Bariatric Institute, our commitment remains focused on providing compassionate, high-quality care and ongoing support for each patient we serve. We look forward to continuing to grow alongside our community and helping more individuals achieve lasting wellness in the months ahead.



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Patient Spotlight: Jessica McGinnis

I have struggled with obesity all my life. Suffering from PCOS and multiple autoimmune disorders have not made it any easier. Year after year I would try the new fad diet and be successful for a short while. Only to feel defeated and resort back to what I knew. Even at my best adult weight I was



not happy with my self-image. Food became a coping mechanism from some traumatic experiences. After two miscarriages I fell into a depression and struggled to pick myself up. Then at the end of 2021 my husband and I were given an opportunity to give a child a home. I quickly realized I needed her more than she needed me. I knew I wanted to be here for her and not just exist. I wanted to be a parent who played an active role in her life. We officially adopted our daughter in July 2024.

I began researching multiple bariatric programs and always came back to KBI. I'm so thankful that I chose this practice.

Dr. Smith is an amazing surgeon who goes above and beyond to care for his patients.

Even though I knew I needed this surgery I had a fear of failure. I would repeat the quote from Joyce Meyer, "when you do feel fear, keep going forward and do what you are supposed to do. Or as I like to say, do it afraid." Taking that first step is always the hardest, but each new step becomes easier.

I have lost 260 lbs. at 21 months post op but have gained so much more. I've gained my life back. I gained self-love, self-worth, and self-confidence. No matter where you start, you deserve the same. I began to appreciate the things that a lot of people may take for granted, such as crossing my legs, putting my shoes on or being able to walk across the room without being out of breath, and riding roller coasters with my daughter.

From my first appointment I could see the dedication and compassion the staff at KBI had for their patients. I never once felt I couldn't do it, because they have been one of my biggest cheerleaders. If I can do it anyone can do it. My only regret is not doing it sooner.

To read more success stories of real patients, visit us online at
Kentuckybariatricinstitute.com/weight-loss-success-stories

Meet Billi Benson, Office Manager

Hi everyone! I'm Billi, the Manager at Kentucky Bariatric Institute. I joined the team in December 2025, and while I currently serve in a management role, my background is in exercise physiology with over 20 years of experience working with bariatric patients.

One of my favorite parts of this field is getting to know our patients and celebrating all of the non-scale victories along the way, both big and small. Those wins truly matter and deserve recognition.

I've also loved getting to know the incredible team here at KBI. They have huge hearts and are genuinely committed to doing what is best for every patient we serve.

You'll see me involved in our support group meetings, especially helping with exercise education. If there are any topics you would like to learn more about, I would love to hear your ideas.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything.



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Spring is a Season for Renewal

As the weather warms and spring settles into Kentucky, it's a great time to refocus on healthy habits and take advantage of the season's natural motivation to move more. Longer days and milder temperatures make it easier to get outside for walks, light activity, or simply spending more time being active throughout the day. Even small increases in movement—like a 10–15 minute walk after meals—can support weight management, digestion, and overall well-being after bariatric surgery.

Spring also brings an abundance of fresh, nutrient-dense produce that can help support a bariatric lifestyle. Foods like strawberries, spinach, asparagus, cucumbers, and zucchini are not only light and refreshing, but also packed with vitamins and fiber. Prioritizing lean protein first at meals, then incorporating seasonal vegetables, can help maintain fullness while keeping nutrition balanced. Planning meals around fresh, simple ingredients can also make healthy eating feel easier and more enjoyable.

With seasonal changes, it's also important to stay mindful of hydration and routine. As temperatures rise, your body may need more fluids throughout the day, especially when increasing activity. Sipping water consistently and avoiding long gaps without hydration can help prevent fatigue and support recovery. Spring is also a good time to reset habits—whether that means re-establishing meal planning, preparing healthy snacks ahead of time, or setting realistic movement goals that fit your daily schedule.

Overall, spring is a season of renewal, making it an ideal opportunity to reinforce the healthy changes that support long-term success after bariatric surgery. Small, consistent choices—like choosing whole foods, staying active, and prioritizing hydration—can make a meaningful difference in energy levels, weight maintenance, and overall quality of life.



Recipes

Lemon Herb Chicken Bowl

Servings: 1

Ingredients:

- 4–5 oz grilled chicken breast
- 1 cup cauliflower rice (or half cauliflower + half brown rice if tolerated)
- 1/2 cup asparagus (or green beans)
- 1/2 zucchini, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil or cooking spray
- Salt & pepper to taste

Lemon Herb Sauce

- 1 tbsp olive oil or light butter
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp garlic (minced or powder)
- 1/2 tsp Italian seasoning or dried herbs
- Optional: pinch of salt

Directions:

1. To cook the chicken, season it with salt, pepper, and herbs. Grill or pan-cook until done, then slice.
2. Cook the vegetables. Sauté asparagus and zucchini in olive oil until tender but still crisp.
3. To prepare the base, heat cauliflower rice in a skillet (2–3 minutes) until soft.
4. Make the sauce by mixing lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, and herbs together.
5. Assemble the bowl by adding cauliflower rice → veggies → chicken → drizzle lemon herb sauce on top.

Strawberry Protein Cheesecake Cups

Makes: 2-3 small cups

Ingredients:

- 1 cup light cream cheese (or 1/2 cream cheese + 1/2 Greek yogurt for lighter option)
- 1/2 cup plain or vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 scoop vanilla protein powder
- 1–2 tbsp sugar-free sweetener (like Stevia or monk fruit)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup strawberries (fresh, chopped)
- Optional: sugar-free whipped topping for layering

Directions:

1. Make the filling: In a bowl, mix cream cheese and Greek yogurt until smooth.
2. Stir in protein powder, sweetener and vanilla extract until fully combined. (If it's too thick, add a splash of almond milk.)
3. Chop strawberries into small pieces.
4. Layer the cups - In small jars or cups, spoon in cheesecake mixture, add strawberries, repeat layers if desired, top with strawberries.
5. Chill (optional but better): Refrigerate 30–60 minutes for best texture.

TREO Foundation's The Walk - Georgetown 2026

Rain or shine, our community showed up.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the TREO Foundation's The Walk – Georgetown 2026. From our patients and community members to our sponsors, Kentucky Bariatric Institute team, and Centerpoint Health staff, your support made this event truly special. Despite the rain and storms, the energy, encouragement and sense of community never stopped.

We are grateful for every step taken and every contribution made in support of obesity awareness, education and patient support. Thank you for helping make this event such a success.

