

## Arkansas' First Laparoscopic Gastric Bypass Surgery Performed Here

**T**wo surgeons at UAMS Medical Center recently completed the state's first laparoscopic gastric bypass surgery — commonly known as “stomach stapling.” James R. Barnes, M.D., and Stephanie W. Granger, M.D., who both recently joined the UAMS Medical Center surgery staff as assistant professors, performed the operation.

The four-hour surgery was completed on a 40-year-old woman 175 pounds over her ideal body weight. “The procedure was very successful, and with proper diet, she should be down to normal weight within one year,” Dr. Barnes said. “Most patients lose half of the weight during the first couple of months. Then it levels off.”

Gastric bypass surgery has been performed for many years and has served as a valuable medical procedure for morbid obesity, usually defined as more than 100 pounds over ideal body weight. Morbid obesity is the most common nutritional disorder affecting Americans, and physicians estimate one-third of Americans fit that category. Laparoscopic surgery involves the use of fiber-optic tubes called laparoscopes. It is a minimally invasive way to treat various disorders within the abdominal cavity.

According to Dr. Granger, “The laparoscopic surgery provides several benefits to the patient including less pain, shorter hospitalization, smaller scars and less recuperating time.” The

hospital stay for traditional open gastric bypass surgery is about four days, and the patient usually cannot return to work for a month. The laparoscopic version requires a two-day hospital stay, and the patient usually returns to work within a week or two.

“We're performing laparoscopic surgery in a sophisticated facility that UAMS Medical Center has just completed,” Barnes said. “It features microlaparoscopic instruments and cameras, advanced video equipment and a new robotic arm to direct the cameras. A voice-activated, computerized system regulates the lighting, temperature, operating table and telephones. The facility is one of only 12 Stryker Endoscopy Centers of Excellence in the country. It will serve as a teaching area where surgeons throughout the country will come to learn these complex procedures.”

Other laparoscopic operations performed by Barnes and Granger are repair of the esophagus and all types of hernias; treatment of reflux and heartburn; and removal of the spleen, gallbladder, kidney, adrenal gland, appendix and colon.

Barnes completed a general surgery residency at UAMS and was most recently a general and laparoscopic surgeon at the Surgical Clinic of North Mississippi in Oxford. Granger completed a general surgery residency at Tulane University in New Orleans and a laparoscopy fellowship at the University of Tennessee in Memphis.