

Dr. Benton Baker III helps patients lose weight successfully

By Ruth Fields
Courier Advertising Writer

When Melanie Inabinet was in high school, her nickname was “Long, Tall Sally.” At five feet, ten inches tall, her most noticeable feature was her long legs, especially when she wore the short skirts that were popular during that era.

For years, Melanie stayed almost as slim as she was when she was in high school. Even when she was approaching middle age, she jogged and maintained a weight of about 145 pounds. She felt like she was at her best.

Ironically, that was when cancer struck. In 1996, when Melanie was 39 years old, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. For ten months, her treatment monopolized her life.

“I was worthless,” she said. “I only had energy to go to work and crawl into bed as soon as I arrived home.”

Because the type of cancer Melanie had thrived on estrogen, Melanie was prescribed Tamoxifen, a drug that inhibits the absorption of estrogen. In 2003, after six years of Tamoxifen, Melanie underwent a radical hysterectomy.

Although she knew that many people experience sluggish metabolism after hysterectomies, somehow Melanie didn’t think it would happen to her. She was wrong.

“That is when the weight gain came,” she said. “Now I understand why our dogs got fat after being fixed. It happened to me!”

Shortly after her surgery, Melanie’s father had a stroke. She and her husband accepted most of the responsibility of caring for both of her aging parents, so the next few years were a “blur.” Melanie comforted herself with her favorite foods, which included chocolate and foods that were high in carbohydrates and salt.

“Some people stop eating and lose weight when they are under stress,” she said. “I am just the opposite. I began packing in the pounds and never stopped to notice.”

The overeating, combined with her slowed metabolism, caused Melanie’s weight to soar. She remembers with regret the day she abandoned her traditional pants and tucked-in blouses for pants with elasticized waistbands and long blouses worn untucked.

“That’s when you know you’ve got a problem,” she said. Soon, shopping wasn’t fun any more. Everything she tried on seemed to feel binding in one place or another.

Melanie preferred to hold on to a mental image of her thinner self, so she found the mirrors in fitting rooms much too honest. She avoided having her picture taken.

When Melanie found that she needed “plus” size clothing, she abandoned hope of ever being slender again.

Melanie was deeply saddened and grieved when her father died and comforted herself with food. She became depressed and her weight eventually soared to over 200 pounds.

Unfortunately, the added weight made her knees and feet hurt, so the idea of exercising wasn’t very appealing.

One day, Melanie, administrator with

Homewatch Caregivers, was checking a patient into Conroe Surgery Center when she overheard two women talking about their weight loss. Both were patients of Dr. Benton Baker III, founder of M. D.’s Weight and Wellness Center. Melanie found her self thinking, “What if . . . ? Could there actually be hope for me? Maybe it’s not too late to try again.”

Melanie had never been to a weight loss doctor before, but realized that she needed help. She was ready for action.

“You’ve got to mentally be prepared and committed,” she said. “I was finally fed up with being overweight and desperately wanted my life back.”

When Melanie went to Baker’s office, she was pleasantly surprised when he spent lots of time with her. He asked her questions about her lifestyle, eating habits and medical history so that he could design a weight-loss program specifically for her. He considered three FDA-approved weight loss drugs, but chose one for Melanie that suited her needs.

“That first visit with Dr. Baker changed my life forever, and for the first time in a long time I began working on *me*.”

As Melanie began to lose weight, Baker monitored her progress, always offering support. When her weight loss hit a plateau, he adjusted her medication.

Melanie lost 40 pounds in just a few months. When, at Baker’s suggestion, she began swimming laps, she quickly lost another 10 pounds. Since she was first featured in *The Courier* in mid-August, she has lost another nine pounds. Today, Melanie is pleased to report that she has lost a total of 59 pounds under Baker’s care – about one-fifth of her total body weight.

Melanie also had high praise for Baker’s wife, Joy, a registered nurse.

“Joy is a joy,” she said. “When I lost three pounds after hitting a plateau, we all cheered. We jumped up and down as

if our team had made a touchdown. It’s so good to have what now seems like an extended family around me, encouraging me and celebrating even three pounds.” Melanie is so convinced that Baker and his staff can help others, she invites people who are committed to losing weight to call her at her office at 281-882-8002.

“Don’t do it until you’re mentally ready,” she said. “Give it your best effort.”

Melanie is confident that she will be able to lose 20 more pounds. Now that she weighs less, she has the energy to exercise more, which in turn helps her to lose more weight. She hopes to eventually take up jogging again.

“My knees no longer hurt. My feet no longer hurt. My yard looks better than it has ever looked before,” she said. “I can bend over plucking out weeds as long as I want to – and I can still breathe!”

Melanie’s blood pressure, which had been elevated before her weight loss, is now back to normal. Best of all, she has more stamina than she has had in years.

“I feel restored, revitalized,” she said. “That is the only reason I have the energy to give more of myself to more of our clients through my profession.”

After years of practicing obstetrics and gynecology and serving as a professor of Ob/Gyn at several universities, Dr. Benton Baker III decided to devote the remainder of his career to helping his patients successfully lose weight.

For Baker, it’s a serious matter that two-thirds of Americans are at high risk of serious health problems because they are overweight.

“Weight is responsible for all sorts of horrible medical conditions,” he said. “It raises the risk of cardiovascular disease. It raises the risk of certain forms of cancer in women, particularly, breast and uterine cancer. It raises the risk of a variety of forms of gastrointestinal problems. . . It raises the risk of osteoarthritis and sleep apnea. And one of the real problems associated with it are psychological problems and depression.”

Baker develops individualized programs for his patients and personally sees each one at every visit. When they reach their target weights, Baker helps patients create maintenance plans so that they won’t regain the weight they lost.

“Our individualized and supportive care is just one of the many keys to the success our patients experience,” he said.

M.D.’s Weight and Wellness Center
Benton Baker III, M.D., FACOG, FACS

200 River Pointe, Suite 115
936-756-THIN (8446)



Melanie Inabinet, a local singer who has recorded two Christian albums, has lost 59 pounds – one-fifth of her body weight – with help from M.D.’s Weight and Wellness Center.



Dr. Benton Baker