

St. Vincent's East Named Blue Distinction Center for Bariatric Surgery

St. Vincent's East

Birmingham, AL – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama has named St. Vincent's East as a Blue Distinction Center for Bariatric Surgery. To date, more than 200 facilities nationwide have received a Blue Distinction Center for Bariatric Surgery designation.

According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the total number of bariatric surgeries increased 400 percent from 1998 to 2004. Obesity is widely recognized as a contributor to serious health risks, so bariatric surgery is being considered as a means to help some individuals regain their health.

“At St. Vincent's East, we take weight loss surgery seriously. We are committed to providing safe, quality care and we can proudly say we've seen success story after success story,” said Lee Schmitt, M.D., Medical Director for the Bariatric Program at St. Vincent's East.

The Bariatric Program at St. Vincent's East provides a full range of bariatric surgical options and a full range of services, including pre-operative education and inpatient care to post-operative support groups and long-term outpatient follow-up and patient education.

St. Vincent's East met numerous requirements necessary to be named as a Blue Distinction Center for Bariatric Surgery, including:

- Full-service inpatient hospital facility
- Full accreditation by The Joint Commission
- Meeting volume requirements for the most recent 12
- Experience and credentialing of the bariatric surgical team
- Appropriate equipment and staffing
- Documented policies and procedures for patient care and follow-up care
- A commitment to quality improvement as evidenced by ongoing quality management and improvement programs

The full list of selection criteria are available to the public at www.bcbs.com.

Blue Distinction is a designation awarded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies to medical facilities that have demonstrated expertise in delivering quality healthcare. The designation is based on rigorous, evidence-based selection criteria established in collaboration with leading clinicians, medical societies, and professional organizations.

Founded in 1946 as East End Memorial Hospital, St. Vincent's East, formerly Medical Center East, relocated to its present site in 1985 continuing a tradition of growth in facilities, medical technology, and uncompromising care in health and medical services. St. Vincent's East offers premier programs in Primary Care, Orthopedics, Obstetrics, Cardiovascular Services, Cancer Treatment, and Emergency Services, as well as comprehensive programs in Diabetes, Endoscopy, Continence, Same-Day Surgery, Digestive Disorders, Sleep Disorders, and Surgical Weight Loss.

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