

Article on the benefits of: **LAPBAND IN SEVERE OBESITY**

LOOKING GOOD, FEELING BETTER

"I no longer have to take medication for diabetes and hypertension."

MADAM ALISON LAU (left), who lost 40kg, and now looks and feels better

SUCCESSFUL SLIMMING

"The surgery has a success rate of 95 per cent in helping patients lose 20kg to 70kg."

DR BALADAS, who has done around 200 gastric banding operations. The procedure involves placing a silicon band around the stomach.



rate of 95 per cent in helping patients lose 20kg to 70kg," said Dr Baladas.

In comparison, only 2 per cent to 5 per cent of severely and morbidly obese people manage to lose weight through diet and exercise.



EXTREME OBESITY: More going for 'banding' ops

By YEO GHIM LAY

MADAM Alison Lau, 40, used to be classified as morbidly obese. At 105kg and 1.58m tall, the mother of three decided to take drastic measures.

In 2003 she booked herself in for gastric banding surgery to dramatically reduce the capacity of her stomach.

Now, more than 40kg lighter and down from a 4XL dress size to an M, she has not been able to resist trading in her baggy, tailor-made clothes for miniskirts and high heels.

"I feel much more confident and happy," said the marketing executive, who weighs about 60kg now.

Consultant surgeon Dr Harold Baladas, now with Raffles Hospital, has performed around 200 of an estimated

300 gastric banding operations carried out since the procedure was introduced in Singapore in 2000.

Last year, he performed gastric banding surgery on about 100 people at Alexandra Hospital, more than twice the number he carried out in 2003.

This year, he is expecting that number to rise to 200.

The procedure involves a silicon band being placed around the stomach to restrict its capacity. The patient is then able to feel satisfied on smaller meals and will eat less.

It takes more than an hour to complete and costs between \$14,500 to \$20,000, but the operation has been shown to be highly effective on severely and morbidly obese people.

"The surgery has a success