

# The doctors who saved our lives

Three **Reveal** readers explain why the doctors who treated them are real-life heroes



Melissa was dangerously overweight until she had a gastric band fitted by Mr Ahmed

Gynaecologist Dr Crawford removed a life-threatening tumour from Emmeline's cervix

Laura suffered several cardiac arrests but was saved by BASICS volunteer Dr Phil Hyde



## 'I lost 9 stone and cheated death'

MELISSA MORGAN, 28, IS AN ACCOUNTANT FROM LONDON. AFTER BEING TOLD SHE WOULD DIE BEFORE SHE WAS 30, SHE HAD A GASTRIC BAND FITTED BY MR AHMED RAHMED

I was looking forward to my 21st birthday when I suddenly developed breathing difficulties and was taken to hospital. I was taking the Pill and it can cause blood clots - I had them on my lungs. Once I was stabilised, I was sent home, but doctors told me not to exercise in case it dislodged the clots. I comforted myself with fizzy drinks and biscuits. I'd been an athletic size 12 and my weight just ballooned. Three years after I'd fallen ill, I weighed 15st 7lb and after an asthma attack, I was admitted to hospital again. A doctor noticed that despite eating only the meals the hospital provided, I was still putting on weight. My metabolism had practically stopped and my weight continued rising to 20st 11lb. My GP said: "At this weight, I'm not confident you'll live to 30." She referred me to Mr Ahmed for weight-loss surgery. We agreed I should have a gastric band inserted. I started losing weight immediately after the operation and in the two years since I had the band put in, I've lost 8st 12lb. I now weigh 11st 13lb and my life is amazing. I can't thank him enough.'

MR AHMED RAHMED IS CONSULTANT IN GASTROINTESTINAL, BARIATRIC AND LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERY AT IMPERIAL COLLEGE HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST IN WEST LONDON

'Like all of the morbidly obese patients I see, Melissa's life was in danger. Despite her young age, she had suffered from blood clots and had asthma and a fatty liver, all related to her weight. One of the reasons she chose a gastric band is because it is one of the most low-risk weight-loss surgeries. The operation, which involves inserting a band at the top of the stomach, is very quick. Melissa was under anaesthetic for less than half an hour. I explained to her that she would need to be disciplined and the band doesn't just work by magic. I told her to stop eating when she was comfortably full. That often means just a quarter of a plate of food. As the band also reduces hunger, she would probably want only one or two meals a day. She was very positive from the outset and the results have been incredible. Her life expectancy is now normal and her asthma and fatty liver have disappeared. Not only is she healthy, but her quality of life is so much better than it was. Melissa has done brilliantly and it gives me a huge amount of satisfaction to know she now has the opportunity to enjoy her life to the full.'