

Keys to Success following Weight Loss Surgery

Incorporate 60 minutes of physical activity daily.

Follow fluid guidelines

- Your primary focus after surgery should be on adequate fluid intake.
- The goal is to drink 64 ounces of liquid each day.
- Sip fluids slowly. If you drink too quickly, you may develop discomfort in the chest, back and/or shoulder blade area.
- Do not use straws.

Use recommended liquids after bariatric surgery

- Water, Crystal Light, Mio, sugar-free Kool Aid, low-calorie juice, sugar-free gelatin, sugar-free Popsicles, broth, V-8 or tomato juice, decaffeinated coffee or tea, skim milk.

Avoid caffeine or carbonation

- Caffeine causes dehydration and acts as an appetite stimulant.
- Carbonation can cause increased bloating and discomfort, especially after gastric bypass surgery.

Limit liquids to 30 minutes before or after eating

- Drinking too soon before or after a meal will cause fullness and may lead to dumping syndrome.
- Drinking too soon or after a meal could potentially stretch your pouch.

Watch for Dumping syndrome

- Do not drink liquids with a meal.
- Do not drink liquids 30 minutes after a meal.
- Do not eat or drink foods made with sugar.
- Avoid high-fat and greasy foods.

Always eat protein first

- Follow the clear liquid, full liquid, pureed diet progression per your doctor's guidelines.
- You may not meet your protein needs during the first few weeks after surgery. Gradually increase as tolerated.
- Due to limited space for food, it is crucial to eat protein-containing foods first and to choose them with each meal.
- Protein is necessary for proper healing of the surgical area and assists with maintaining adequate muscle mass during weight loss.
- Sixty to 80 grams of protein per day is necessary for proper healing and maintaining optimal nutritional status.
- A lack of protein in the diet may cause fatigue, increase hunger sensation and lead to poor nutrition.

Eat three healthful meals per day

- It is recommended pre- and post-surgery to eat three meals per day.
- Choose foods with less than 15 grams of total carbohydrate and less than 3 grams of fat per meal

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Take small bites, chew well and eat slowly

- Eating foods that are not properly chewed results in an increased potential to become lodged at the pouch outlet.
- Food that is lodged will cause nausea, vomiting and discomfort.
- Over time, it could stretch the pouch or disrupt the staple line.
- Eating foods too fast can prevent the signals of satiety/fullness and may result in overeating.
- Start practicing eating slowly by eating with toddler utensils. Make each meal last 20 to 30 minutes. Chew foods 25 to 30 times or until a pureed or baby food texture.

Read labels for sugar alcohol content (usually found in sugar-free products)

- These can cause bloating and cramping.

Use vitamin and mineral supplements in the chewable, crushed, or liquid forms

- Begin taking vitamin/mineral supplements one to two weeks after surgery.
- Take chewable multivitamin/mineral supplements, calcium with vitamin D and B12 daily as directed.
- You must take these supplements forever. Do not quit taking your supplements, no matter how good you feel.