

Vertical Sleeve Gastrectomy

Diet Progression



Saint Clare's
Dover Hospital

saintclares.com • 973-537-3805

Dietary Guidelines after Bariatric Surgery

It is very important to follow the nutrition plan post operatively as noted in this booklet. These guidelines have been designed by your healthcare team to enable you to safely reach your weight loss goals while achieving adequate nutritional intake to prevent deficiencies.

You will progress slowly through 4 dietary stages over the course of the next 4 to 6 weeks. These stages are not recommendations, but rather are necessary for the safe consumption of food while you are still healing from surgery.

Please refer to the list of foods that are appropriate in each stage of your diet which can be found on the following pages.

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Begin 4 to 6 weeks post operatively or as directed by your surgeon.

Protein

- Adequate protein intake is essential to prevent a nutritional deficiency and preserve muscle mass. Protein also plays an important role in the postoperative healing process. Inadequate protein intake over time may also contribute to hair loss.
- Beginning with the postoperative stage 2, full liquids, you must consume a liquid protein supplement at least 2 times per day to meet your protein requirements for healing and muscle mass preservation. Once you have progressed through the first 3 stages and you are on the modified regular diet, it is possible to meet your protein requirements through food alone.
- The daily goal for protein intake is at least 64 grams.
- Protein supplements should be high protein and low carbohydrate. Choose a supplement that provides 25-30 grams protein and <5 grams carbohydrate per 12 oz. serving. The amount of protein supplement each day will depend on stage of diet progression and how much protein you will consume by food items.
 - Some examples include Pure Protein, Premier Protein, EAS, Isopure, Unjury.

Fluid

- Maintain adequate hydration by sipping on calorie free and non-carbonated beverages in between meals.
- The daily goal for fluid intake is at least 64 ounces or 8 cups.
- Avoidance of caffeine for the first month postoperatively is recommended. Limit Caffeinated beverages to ≤ 16 oz daily after the first month.
- Call your physician if you experience low urine output, dark colored urine and lethargy or lightheadedness as these may be symptoms of dehydration.

Vitamin/Mineral Supplementation

Lifelong supplementation is necessary as you will not be able to obtain all of the necessary micronutrients in sufficient quantities to prevent deficiencies.

- Complete multivitamin- may be liquid, chewable or tablet.
- B12- 1000 micrograms per day.
- Calcium citrate- 1200mg per day divided in 2 doses. Avoid taking your calcium and iron supplement at the same time as absorption of

both will be affected.

- Vitamin D- 2000 IU per day.
- Iron- will recommended by your surgeon if deficient. Average recommended doses range from 40-65mg per day. Ferrous fumarate is preferential over other forms of iron.

Meal Structure

- Eat meals and snacks at regularly scheduled times.
- You should not eat more than three meals and two protein rich snacks per day.
- Keep a food journal consisting of what, when, and how much you eat each day.

Eating Tips

- Drink all fluids slowly, do not gulp, chug, or use straws. If you drink too fast or through a straw you may over fill your new stomach with liquid and/or air causing gas, pain, hiccups, nausea, and/or vomiting.
- You must eat all meals slowly and always **stop eating when you feel full** even if you have not finished your appropriate portioned meal.
- You should consciously **chew all foods 25-30 times** before swallowing.
- **Do not eat your meals and drink fluids at the same time.** Stop drinking 30 minutes before a meal and wait 30 minutes after a meal before drinking again. Eating and drinking too closely together may cause bloating, nausea, and vomiting.
- Once you reach the modified regular diet it is still of utmost importance to avoid foods high in fat and sugar as this will affect your weight loss outcomes.
- Avoid alcohol for the first 3-6 months after surgery. Alcohol is empty calories which will affect your weight loss outcomes. Remember if you do consume alcoholic beverages, you must consume additional fluids as alcohol is a diuretic.

Daily Goals

Remember 64/64 daily. 64 grams of protein and 64 ounces of fluid are the minimum requirements.

STAGE 1: Clear Liquid Diet

- Follow for 2 days post operatively or as directed by your surgeon.
- A clear liquid diet is a diet consisting of foods or beverages made from liquids that you can see through.
- These foods should be sugar free, contain no added sugars, and be non-carbonated.

Guidelines

- 1-2 ounces of fluid every 10-15 minutes should be taken as tolerated.
- If you drink too quickly you may experience pain and/or nausea.
- Do not drink fluids that are too hot or too cold for the first six weeks to avoid potential muscle spasms or pain.
- Avoid using straws as they may cause excess gas.
- Your daily goal for fluid intake is 64 ounces per day.

Food Choices

- Clear fruit juices without added sugar
- Water/ice chips
- Sugar free gelatin
- Fat free broth (chicken, beef, or vegetable)
- Unsweetened, decaffeinated tea/iced tea
- Non-carbonated flavored waters (Propel Fitness water, Fruit-2-O, G2, Crystal Light, Sugar Free Kool-Aid)

STAGE 2: Full-Liquid Diet

- Follow days 3 through 14 post operatively or as directed by your surgeon.
- A full liquid diet is a diet that includes all clear liquids with the addition of milk based liquids and other foods which are listed below.

Guidelines

- Continue to consume 64 ounces of total fluid each day in between your meals.
- Consume 3 liquid meals per day plus 2 protein supplements in between each meal.
- Meals should not exceed 4 ounces or ½ cup in size. Start with 1-2 ounce meals and work up to 3-4 ounce meals.
- Remember to sip slowly to avoid nausea, vomiting, and discomfort.
- As the consistency of your food items is liquid, you may not feel a sense of satiety in this stage. You will begin to feel a sense of fullness as you progress to the next stage.
- You should start your vitamin and mineral supplementation at this time.

Food Choices

- Skim milk/ Skim Plus
- Unsweetened almond or soy milk
- Low fat strained cream soups
- Greek yogurt that does not contain any fruit pieces
- Sugar free/fat free puddings
- Thin, hot cereal such as farina, cream of wheat or grits
- Protein supplement

Sample Menu: Stage 2

Time	Food
7:30 am	3-4 ounces thin cream of wheat cereal (thinned with skim milk)
In between breakfast and lunch	protein shake*
12:00 pm	3-4 ounces Greek yogurt
In between lunch and dinner	protein shake*
6:00 pm	3-4 ounces low fat strained pea soup

*Slowly sip your protein supplementation in between meals. You should consume at least 50 grams of protein daily from supplementation as you are only consuming ~15-20 grams protein from foods during this full liquid stage. It is important to also focus on meeting the minimum requirement of 64 ounces fluid each day.

STAGE 3: Soft Diet

- Follow for 2 weeks through 4 weeks post operatively or as directed by your surgeon.
- A soft diet is a diet that includes all clear and full liquids with the addition of soft, moist foods which are listed below.

Guidelines

- Continue to consume 64 ounces of total fluid each day in between your meals.
- Consume 3 soft meals per day plus 2 protein supplements in between each meal.
- Meals should not exceed 4-6 ounces.
- Focus on the protein food items first and stop eating when you feel full even if you have not finished your meal.
- Chew all food items 25-30 times.
- Introduce new food items one at a time and note any issues of intolerance in your food journal.

STAGE 3: Soft Diet (continued)

Food Choices

Protein food choices:

- Soft cooked eggs or egg whites; limit yolks to 3 times per week.
- Nonfat or low fat cottage cheese or ricotta
- Low fat soft cheeses
- Greek yogurt
- Canned chicken or fishes moistened with low fat mayo, mustard, salsa; no raw vegetables
- Boiled or stewed soft cooked white meat poultry
- Baked or poached fish filet
- Tofu
- Cooked beans, lentils, legumes

Fruits and Vegetables (1/4 cup maximum serving):

- Avoid fibrous vegetables and fruit such as celery, cabbage, corn, asparagus, grapes and citrus membranes.
- Canned fruits (drained)
- Mashed ripe banana
- Unsweetened applesauce
- Canned vegetables (drained)
- Soft cooked zucchini, squash, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, green beans

Grains/Starches (1/4 cup maximum serving):

- Oatmeal or cream of wheat thinned with skim, soy or almond milk (unsweetened)
- Mashed potato thinned with skim milk

Other:

- Low fat/sugar condiments only
- Herbs and spices

Sample Menu: Stage 3

Time	Food	Notes
7:30am	2-3 ounces soft cooked scrambled egg with 1 ounce cheese 2 ounces diced canned peaches drained	Wait 30 minutes after meal before sipping on non-carbonated sugar free liquids and protein shake.
In between breakfast and lunch	protein shake*	Stop drinking 30 minutes before next meal.
12:00pm	4 ounces tuna salad with light mayo- (no raw veggies) 2 ounces mashed banana	Wait 30 minutes after meal before sipping on non-carbonated sugar free liquids and protein shake.
In between lunch and dinner	protein shake*	Stop drinking 30 minutes before next meal.
6:00pm	4 ounces cooked flounder 2 ounces cooked sliced carrots	Wait 30 minutes after meal before sipping on non-carbonated sugar free liquids.

*Slowly sip your protein supplementation in between meals. The amount of protein supplementation required daily during this stage depends on the amount of protein consumed from food items at meals. It is important to also focus on meeting the minimum requirement of 64 ounces fluid each day.

STAGE 4: Modified Regular Diet

- Begin 4 to 6 weeks post operatively or as directed by your surgeon.
- The modified regular diet includes most foods.
- Compliance to portions and meal schedule during this stage and onward is the key to your success.
- It is recommended you follow up with the Registered Dietitian 4-6 weeks post operatively to ensure nutritional success in the attainment of your weight loss goals.

Guidelines

- Continue to consume 64 ounces of total fluid each day in between your meals.
- Consume 3 meals per day and one high protein snack; you need not continue taking your protein supplementation if you are able to

STAGE 4: Modified Regular Diet (continued)

consume 64 grams of protein from your meals.

- Meals should not exceed 4-6 ounces.
- Focus on the protein food items first and stop eating when you feel full even if you have not finished your meal.
- Chew all food items 25-30 times.
- Continue to keep a food journal.

Food Choices

- All foods in stages 1-3 with the following additions:
- Lean, tender whole muscle meats
- Lean ground meats
- Nuts and nut butters; sparingly however as these are very calorically dense.
- Chopped raw vegetables, NOTE: you may need to continue to avoid fibrous vegetables such as celery, cabbage, corn, asparagus, grapes and citrus membranes.
- Rice, quinoa, pasta and toasted whole grain bread products.

Sample Menu: Stage 4

Time	Food	Notes
7:30am	2-3 ounces soft cooked scrambled egg with 1 ounce cheese 2 ounces diced canned peaches drained	Wait 30 minutes after meal before sipping on non-carbonated sugar free liquids; stop drinking 30 minutes before next meal.
12:00pm	3-4 ounces tuna salad with light mayo ½ slice toasted wheat bread 1-2 ounces peeled cucumber slices	Wait 30 minutes after meal before sipping on non-carbonated sugar free liquids; stop drinking 30 minutes before next meal.
3:00pm	2 slices (2 ounces) of low fat cheese 4 whole grain crackers 2 ounces fresh fruit	Wait 30 minutes after snack before sipping on non-carbonated sugar free liquids; stop drinking 30 minutes before next meal.
6:00pm	4 ounces grilled chicken or lean steak 2 ounces cooked sliced carrots	Wait 30 minutes after meal before sipping on non-carbonated sugar free liquids; stop drinking 30 minutes before next meal.

Possible Side Effects

Side Effects That May Occur

Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea and vomiting can be prevented if recommended dietary guidelines are followed after your surgery. Add one new food at a time to reduce intolerances. Make sure to eat slowly, keep fluids separate from solids, pay attention to portion control and feelings of fullness and adhere to the recommended consistencies. Call your surgeon if symptoms persist.

Constipation

Reasons for constipation may include inadequate fluid intake, decreased food intake, decreased activity, medications and inadequate fiber intake. To improve symptoms, make sure your minimum fluid intake is at least 64 ounce per day, followed by adequate food intake, increased physical activity and increased fiber intake. A fiber supplement in between meals such as Metamucil or Benefiber may be appropriate to reach your fiber requirements, however consult your surgeon before implementing a supplement.

Hair Loss

Hair loss can occur after bariatric surgery. To minimize this side effect, reaching your daily protein goal of 64 grams per day is very important.

Weight Gain

Reverting back to pre-surgical habits not in compliance with these guidelines and the “modified regular” diet stage 4 can result in regaining of lost weight. Eating foods high in fat and sugar will result in slowing weight loss or weight gain. High fat and high sugar foods to avoid as part of your long term lifestyle change include:

- Fried foods and fast foods
- Full fat dairy products
- High fat meats and meats with visible fat/skin
- Snack foods, potato/tortilla chips, cheese curls
- Added fats such as butter, oil, salad dressings, mayo
- Pastries, donuts, cookies, ice cream
- Candy
- Sweetened cereals
- Regular sweetened beverages, soft drinks
- Added sweeteners such as sugar, honey, maple syrup
 - Approved sugar substitutes include aspartame, saccharin, stevia, and sucralose.

You have the keys to your success.

Your surgery is a tool to take you to your weight loss goals, however you determine how you will use this tool for the best possible outcomes. Long term success is achieved with permanent lifestyle changes which include both compliance to nutrition guidelines in addition to regular physical activity. The “diet” piece is just half of the equation to weight loss. Your results will be dramatically enhanced when you adopt a lifestyle which includes daily physical activity beyond the activities of daily living. It is recommended you begin a supervised exercise program once you are given medical clearance to do so. The benefits of daily physical activity go beyond increased weight loss and muscle toning. Regular physical activity promotes stress relief and mental well-being. Strive for 30 minutes on most days, with a minimum of 5 days per week.

Thank you for letting us be part of your weight loss journey. Please remember to schedule a follow up appointment with the Registered Dietitian 4-6 weeks following your surgery or sooner if needed.

Before weight loss surgery

- Begin to keep a food journal as this is necessary step post operatively.
- Begin taking the multivitamin and mineral supplements previously discussed.
- Begin to follow the “modified regular” diet stage 4, omitting high fat and sugar foods.
- Practice the eating tips previously discussed.
- Begin a physical activity program.



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400 West Blackwell St.
Dover, NJ 07801