

# Gastric Sleeve Diet Guidelines

The following information provides guidelines for you to follow before and after Gastric Sleeve surgery, and for the rest of your life. Gastric Sleeve surgery is a weight loss tool. After surgery, you will be required to make lifelong changes in your eating habits and to exercise on a regular basis in order to achieve and maintain your weight-loss goals.

Gastric Sleeve surgery reduces the size of the stomach which restricts the volume of food that you can consume at one time. This means that you will feel full after eating a small amount of food. The surgery also induces hormonal changes which help prevent you from feeling excessively hungry. You should avoid drinking liquids with meals. This is to prevent overfilling of the stomach. Frequent snacking or grazing must also be avoided as this contributes to excess calorie intake and can slow weight loss or cause weight gain.

Exercise is an important component of weight loss success. Exercise is recommended before and after surgery in order to maximize the amount of weight that you lose and keep off. If you have not been an active exerciser, you should start something like walking or working with resistance bands.

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*It is important to follow the lifetime Gastric Sleeve Diet guidelines, supplement guidelines, and exercise recommendations in order to achieve and maintain optimum weight loss success.*

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## Pre-Surgery Diet Practice Tips

1. Begin planning a schedule for mealtimes, fluids, vitamin and mineral supplements.
2. Begin some form of exercise.
3. Beware of alcohol.
4. Choose low-fat foods and avoid fried foods.
5. Decrease intake of desserts and sugary snacks.
6. Drink at least 64 ounces of low or no calorie beverages a day. Water is the best option.
7. Eat 3 meals a day. Do not skip breakfast.
8. Eat more fruits and vegetables.
9. Find a protein supplement that you like and that meets criteria.
10. Practice chewing foods thoroughly, 20 to 40 times per bite or to a paste consistency.
11. Practice drinking water and other fluids between meals, NOT with meals.
12. Practice sipping liquids.
13. Purchase chewable vitamin and mineral supplements.
14. Recommend using natural sugar substitutes such as Truvia or Stevia.

15. Review the following information on the gastric sleeve diet.
16. Start cutting back on fast food and eating out. Begin making healthy meal choices.
17. Start decreasing portion sizes, switch from a regular dinner plate to a smaller salad plate.
18. Start weaning off of caffeine and carbonated beverages.
19. Stop drinking sugar-sweetened beverages like soda, Kool-Aide, Juice and Sunny Delight.

## Pre-Surgery Checklist

The following tasks should be completed before surgery:

- Consider a pill crusher or pill splitter. *NOTE: some medications should not be crushed.*
- Consider purchasing a baby spoon, cocktail fork and small plate to help you eat slower.
- Continue to work on the “Pre-surgery Diet Practice Tips” at the beginning of this handout.
- Have measuring spoons and cups on hand.
- It is a good idea to prepare some pureed foods to be used after surgery, ice cube trays are a good way to freeze small amounts of pureed foods. Once frozen, put in freezer baggie and label.
- Purchase a mini food processor or blender.
- Purchase supplements (protein shakes, vitamin and mineral supplements).
- Use pill cases to help you remember if you took your vitamin and mineral supplements.

## Post Gastric Sleeve Surgery Diet Information

### Day 1 to Day 2 after Gastric Sleeve Surgery

#### Clear Liquid Diet

Initial portion size should be no more than 2 to 4 tablespoons of food per meal for the first month. At first you may not be able to tolerate this amount. Over time, you will slowly tolerate more volume at each meal. Long term, the stomach will eventually hold about 1/2 cup of food per meal.

The clear liquid diet means fluids or foods that are liquid at room temperature and can almost be seen through. You should also use your protein supplement, even if it is not a clear liquid, to ensure protein intake of at least 30 grams per day during this time period. If it is a powder protein supplement, mix it with water this first week after surgery.

Examples of clear liquids diet:

- ✓ 100 percent fruit juice, without pulp
- ✓ Broth
- ✓ PowerAde Zero
- ✓ Sugar-free Gelatin

- ✓ Herbal tea, caffeine free tea
- ✓ Sugar-free Popsicles

### **Day 3 to Day 14 after Gastric Sleeve Surgery:**

#### **Full Liquid Diet**

Initial portion size should be no more than 2 to 4 tablespoons of food per meal for the first month. At first you may not be able to tolerate this amount. Over time, you will slowly tolerate more volume at each meal. Long term, the stomach will eventually hold about 1/2 cup of food per meal.

Full liquid diet consists of foods which are liquid at room temperature that you are unable to see through. Remember to sip liquids, *do not gulp*.

Examples of full liquid diet:

- ✓ Skim (non-fat) milk or Lactaid milk
- ✓ Plain soy milk or Almond milk
- ✓ Thin, strained cream soup. *Must be smooth—NO pieces of food.*
- ✓ No Added Sugar instant breakfast drink prepared with non-fat milk
- ✓ Protein drinks. Try to get at least 30 grams of protein from protein shakes per day during this part of the diet
- ✓ Thinned plain or “light” yogurt that has no fruit pieces in it. *It must be pourable.*
- ✓ Thinned, sugar-free, fat-free pudding or custard
- ✓ Thinned cream of wheat or cream of rice cereal

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***Avoid citrus juice and tomato juice for the first 3 weeks. Coffee and decaffeinated coffee contain acids which are irritating to the stomach lining and should be avoided for the first 6 weeks after surgery for healing.***

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## Day 15 to Day 21 After Gastric Sleeve Surgery

### Pureed Diet

Initial portion size should be no more than 2 to 4 tablespoons of food per meal for the first month. At first you may not be able to tolerate this amount. Over time, you will slowly tolerate more volume at each meal. Long term, the stomach will eventually hold about 1/2 cup of food per meal.

You may now begin a pureed diet, which includes the following.

- ❖ Eat protein foods first, and then if you are not too full add fruits and vegetables.
- ❖ Make sure foods are well pureed. Foods need to be the consistency of applesauce or baby food.
- ❖ Start slowly. If you do not tolerate pureed foods, go back to the liquid diet and try again in a few days.
- ❖ **Begin dry meals**, remember to drink liquids between meals, not with meals once you get to this stage. (Stop liquids 30 minutes before a meal and wait 30 to 45 minutes after meal to resume liquids).
- ❖ Continue protein drinks every day to get required amount of protein.

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***Remember: If you can chew it, DON'T do it.***

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### Tips for the Pureed Diet

- ✓ Add liquid for ease of blending. Add enough liquid to cover the blades. Options include: skim milk, broth, yogurt, cream soup, gravy, sour cream or half and half.
- ✓ Take advantage of your favorite leftovers from before surgery. Puree these foods and freeze them in an ice tray. *Note: each cube is approximately 1 to 2 TBSP.* When frozen, pop out into a zip-lock bag, label, date, and freeze until needed.
- ✓ Cut foods into small pieces before putting into the blender or food processor.
- ✓ Food should be pureed to the consistency of baby food or smooth applesauce.
- ✓ Make sure there are no particles, seeds or lumps remaining. If so, put food through a strainer or add a small amount of additional fluid and puree longer.
- ✓ Remember your protein drinks.
- ✓ Remove all seeds, skins and fat.
- ✓ Start with 2 Tablespoons portion size. No more than 4 Tablespoons at the most. Listen to your body and STOP eating as soon as you feel full.
- ✓ Try to make everything low carbohydrate.
- ✓ You will need a blender or food processor or you can buy baby food.

**Meats:** Very lean and dry meats puree better by adding a small amount of broth. Fish also tend to be dry. Improve the texture by adding small amount of lemon juice, mayo or strained tartar sauce.

**Starches:** Try pureed peas, canned beans, sweet potatoes. Starches puree better when hot. Substitute cream of rice cereal prepared with a flavorful broth. Pasta or rice are not recommended as they are not well tolerated.

**Vegetables:** Cook vegetables until soft. If using canned vegetables, drain first. Add vegetable broth and puree. Add a small amount of liquid until it reaches the smooth applesauce consistency.

**Fruit:** If using canned fruit, drain first. Add a few drops of lemon juice to help prevent them from discoloring.

Once you begin to eat pureed foods (which are considered solids) you will want to start differentiating between liquids and solids. Meals should include pureed foods, and so liquids (including protein drinks) should be taken separately from your meals. You should eat 3 meals a day.

### Hints for Measuring Foods

Liquids or soft/pureed foods are best measured in measuring cups or measuring spoons. The following table helps convert everything. *For example, in a 1/4 cup, there is 2 fluid ounces, or 60 mL, or 4 Tablespoons.*

Cups	Cups to Ounces	Cups/Ounces to mL	Tablespoons
1/8 cup	1 fluid ounce	30 mL	2 Tablespoons
1/4 cup	2 fluid ounces	60 mL	4 Tablespoons
1/2 cup	4 fluid ounces	120 mL	8 Tablespoons
3/4 cup	6 fluid ounces	180 mL	12 Tablespoons
1 cup	8 fluid ounces	240 mL	16 Tablespoons

### Pureed Diet Sample Meals

The following are ideas for pureed meals. Each meal consists of about 1/4 cup. Use your own creativity to add variety to your diet. Spices and seasonings are not limited after surgery. Remember to make each of your 3 daily meals protein-based.

*Note: TBSP equals Tablespoon*

**Example 1:** 2 TBSP of a pureed cheese omelet. 1 TBSP of a hot cereal. 1 TBSP plain yogurt.

**Example 2:** 2 TBSP pureed cottage cheese. 2 TBSP pureed fruit.

**Example 3:** 1 TBSP smooth peanut butter. 1 TBSP pureed fruit.

**Example 4:** 2 TBSP grated cheese. 1 TBSP polenta. 1TBSP pureed roasted vegetables or marinara sauce.

**Example 5:** 2 TBSP fat free refried beans or hummus. 1 TBSP grated cheese. Garnish with pureed salsa and low fat sour cream.

**Example 6:** 2 TBSP mashed tuna or salmon salad made with 1/2 tsp mayo. 1 TBSP pureed fruit.

**Example 7:** 2 TBSP mashed smooth egg or chicken salad made with 1 tsp mayo. 1 TBSP pudding.

**Example 8:** 3 TBSP ricotta cheese. 1 TBSP marinara sauce (pureed). 1 TBSP sweet potatoes.

**Example 9:** 2 TBSP pureed meat (pureed with 1 tsp gravy or broth). 1 TBSP mashed sweet potatoes. 1 TBSP pureed vegetable.

**Example 10:** 1 TBSP pureed chili. 1 TBSP sugar-free, fat-free pudding.

## Vitamins

Start your vitamin and mineral supplements when instructed by your surgeon.

## Day 22 to Day 28 After Gastric Sleeve Surgery

### Soft Solid Food Diet

Initial portion size should be no more than 2 to 4 tablespoons of food per meal for the first month. At first you may not be able to tolerate this amount. Over time, you will slowly tolerate more volume at each meal. Long term, the stomach will eventually hold about 1/2 cup of food per meal.

If you are tolerating pureed foods, you may now begin a soft diet. Also, try 1 to 2 new foods a day. This will help you to learn what foods you tolerate.

- ✓ Avoid foods high in sugar and fat.
- ✓ Continue your protein drinks between meals.
- ✓ Go slowly. If you do not tolerate the trial of soft foods, resume pureed foods and try again in a week.
- ✓ Remember your stomach pouch empties more slowly with more solid or dense foods than with liquids.
- ✓ Space meals 4 to 5 hours apart
- ✓ You will be able to tolerate a smaller quantity of solid food than with liquids.

### Examples of soft diet (no added sugar)

- ✓ Baked fish
- ✓ Baked, grilled or rotisserie chicken
- ✓ Bananas
- ✓ Canned peaches or pears in water or juice
- ✓ Finely shaved deli meat
- ✓ Imitation crab meat, baby shrimp
- ✓ Scrambled, poached or hard boiled eggs
- ✓ Tuna or egg salad (no onions, celery, olives) may with fat-free mayo
- ✓ Well-cooked vegetables without seeds or skin (no corn or peas)

Moist foods are better tolerated. Moisten meats with broth, fat-free mayo, gravy or sauce.

Fish and seafood proteins are softer and easier to break down than poultry or red meat proteins.

Reheating foods tends to make them dry out and hard to tolerate.

## Day 29 After Gastric Sleeve Surgery

### Regular Diet

- ✓ **Avoid** high sugar and high fat foods to avoid a high calorie intake.
- ✓ Go slowly. Try a small amount to see how you feel.
- ✓ Rice, pastas and doughy bread may not be tolerated for 2 to 3 months or more.
- ✓ Try fresh fruits without the skin first. If tolerated, the skin can be tried the next time. Salads are generally well tolerated if chewed well.

### Steps to Adding Solid Foods

- ✓ Try only 1 small bite of the new food and chew well. Wait a while and if there are no problems, take another bite.
- ✓ If at any time you feel too full, nauseated or if you vomit, stop eating and rest. Take only clear liquids at the next meal. Have pureed foods at the next meal, then back to solid foods at the next meal.
- ✓ Solid foods will fill your stomach pouch more than liquids, so you will be eating smaller quantities of foods than liquids.

### Common Problem Foods

*Avoid these types of food for at least 2 to 3 months after surgery.*

**Hard/crunchy foods** may always be poorly tolerated.

**Fried/greasy foods** are hard to digest and are very high in calories.

**Red meats** such as steak, roast beef, pork or wild game. *Red meat is high in muscle fiber, which is difficult to separate even with a great deal of chewing.* Also, avoid hamburger and hot dogs for one month after surgery.

**Other foods to avoid:**

- ✓ Corn chips, potato chips, tortilla chips, hard taco shells
- ✓ Nuts and seeds, unless chewed to a past consistency
- ✓ Breads, rolls, biscuits. *Toasted bread may be better tolerated.*
- ✓ Pasta and rice
- ✓ Membrane of citrus fruits
- ✓ Dried fruits, nuts, popcorn, and coconut

**Important Diet Guidelines**

1. Eat 3 meals a day. *Avoid snacking and grazing.*
2. Eat small amounts, measure your meals and consume no more than ½ cup. (Initial portion size should be no more than 2-4 tablespoons of food per meal for the first month. At first you may not be able to tolerate this amount. Over time, you will slowly tolerate more volume at each meal. Long term, the stomach will eventually hold about 1/2 cup of food per meal.)
3. Always eat protein foods first.
4. Do not eat food and drink liquid together. Stop consuming liquids 30 minutes before eating and wait to start drinking liquids for 30 to 45 minutes after you have finished your meal.
5. You are required to take vitamin and mineral supplements for the rest of your life.
6. Eat slowly!
  - Each meal should last 15 to 20 minutes.
  - Avoid gulping foods and drinks.
  - All foods must be well-chewed to a paste consistency.
  - Using a small fork or spoon (baby utensils) can help control portion sizes.
  - Have one place to eat. Avoid reading or watching TV while you eat. This helps you enjoy your food; concentrate on eating slower and to be mindful of when your stomach is full.
7. Drink plenty of calorie-free, non-carbonated, caffeine-free beverages between meals.
  - Never gulp fluids, sip slowly.
  - Calorie containing beverages should be avoided.



- Water is the best choice.
8. Soft foods or sliders allow you to consume larger volumes of food. When eating sliders make sure to measure your food and only consume ½ cup.  
**Sliders are:** yogurts, soups including thin chili, oatmeal, cottage cheese, cereals, custards, gelatin and puddings.
  9. If you don't tolerate a food the first time, wait a week and try again.
  10. You may find that you tolerate a certain food one day and not the next. It is normal for this to happen.
  11. If you don't tolerate certain foods or notice nausea, vomiting or diarrhea during or after eating, ask yourself the following questions:
    - Did I chew to a paste consistency?
    - Did I eat too fast?
    - Did I eat too much volume, no more than ½ cup?
    - Did I drink fluid with my meal or too close to my meal?
    - Did I eat something high in sugar or fat?
    - Was the food moist or was it too dry?

## Key Points to Remember

*Please remember, this is not easy and you may have questions. Please call us with them.*

1. You will never be able to eat the portions you consumed prior to surgery.
2. For a safe weight loss, you need to eat a healthy, well balanced diet.
3. Be sure to make healthy food choices to obtain the most nutrition per serving.
4. Choose low-calorie, nutrient dense foods.
5. *Be patient.* At first, you will fill up after just a few bites. This is normal. Stop eating when you feel full or around ½ cup volume.
6. Initial meal size should be approximately 2-4 Tablespoons per meal – 3 meals a day. Volume tolerance will increase after healing. Continue to eat slowly, chew foods thoroughly and drink in between meals.
7. When you try a new food, take one bite to see if it is comfortable for you.
8. You must take the recommended vitamin and mineral supplements every day for the rest of your life or until medically advised not to.
9. You should consume one protein shake daily.
10. Following the recommended diet rules will help you lose weight and keep it off.
11. Your dedication to diet, exercise and lifestyle changes will dictate your success after surgery.
12. You can defeat the surgery, resulting in weight gain. Grazing, drinking fluid with meals, or consuming high calorie foods or liquids are examples of ways that the surgery can be defeated.
13. Keep a food and exercise diary. Record the time of meals, food consumed, portion size and preparation method. You may be asked to bring a food or exercise journal to follow up appointments.
14. Attend Bariatric Support Group meetings on a regular basis. Support Group is the last Thursday of every month except for November and December. November and December support group is the third Thursday of the month.
15. Exercise regularly and follow your doctor's orders or restrictions when exercising.

### **Behavior Modification Techniques. Good Advice for Everyone!**

1. Don't eat in front of the TV.
2. Don't read while eating.
3. Pre-portion your food on to your plate and put the rest of the food away.
4. Keep tempting foods out of the house.
5. Don't go to the grocery store hungry.
6. Make a shopping list.
7. Use smaller bowls and plates.
8. Keep healthy foods available.
9. Focus on activities other than eating.
10. Brush your teeth after meals or if feeling the desire to eat.
11. Don't eat standing up. Sit down and enjoy your meal.
12. Don't stand at the food table at parties or buffets.
13. Offer to bring a healthy food item to a party.
14. Park your car far away from your destination and WALK at a good pace.
15. Get up to change the TV instead of using the remote.
16. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
17. Keep a food and exercise diary.
18. Weigh yourself at most the same day, same time, once a week!!!
19. Attend all appointments.
20. Attend support group.

## Protein Supplements

Protein is the most important nutrient to concentrate on when resuming your diet. Because the volume of your meals will be limited, you will need a protein supplement to meet your needs.

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*You should aim for a minimum of 60 to 80 grams of protein per day from protein shakes and food.*

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Protein is important for wound healing, sparing loss of muscle mass, minimizing hair loss and preventing long term protein malnutrition. Remember to eat protein foods first at each meal.

### Guidelines for Choosing a Protein Supplement

- ✓ Choose a whey protein supplement. It is the best absorbed.
- ✓ Your protein can be from a powdered protein supplement or in “ready-to-drink” form.
- ✓ It should contain at least 20-30 grams of PROTEIN per serving.
- ✓ The grams of TOTAL CARBOHYDRATES per serving should be less than half the amount of protein per serving. *Do not look* at the amount of sugar in the supplement; it is already included in the total carbohydrates.

### General Protein Content of Some Common Foods

Food	Portion	Grams of Protein
Beans, cooked (pinto, chili, kidney, lima)	¼ cup	4
Beef	1 ounce	7
Cottage cheese, low-fat	¼ cup	7
Mozzarella cheese	1 ounce	7
Chicken	1 ounce	7
Cod	1 ounce	7
Crab, steamed	3 ounces	6
Egg	1 whole	8
Egg substitute	¼ cup	8
Lobster, steamed	1 ounce	6
Milk, 1% or skim	8 ounces	8
Non-fat dry milk	1/3 cup, dry	8
Pork chop, lean	1 ounce	7
Salmon	1 ounce	7

Shrimp	1 ounce	6
Soybeans (edamame)	¼ cup	7
Soy milk, plain	8 ounces	7
Soy Nuts	1/8 cup	7
Textured vegetable protein	¼ cup	6
Tofu	¼ cup	5
Tuna, canned	1 ounce	7
Turkey	1 ounce	7
Lunch meat, low-fat	1 ounce	5

### Measuring Hints

- ✓ 1 ounces of meat is about equal to 3 to 4 tablespoons of chopped or ground meat.
- ✓ 1 ounce of grated cheese, cottage cheese, tuna or egg salad is about 1/4 cup (or 4 tablespoons).
- ✓ A 3 ounce portion size of chicken or meat is about the size of a deck of cards.

### High Protein Ideas

#### Chicken or turkey

- ✓ Pureed: use baby food or make your own. Try mixing it into strained cream soup.
- ✓ Baked or grilled breast meat. Dark meat is usually moister than breast meat, but is higher in calories.
- ✓ Thin-sliced and shaved deli slices.
- ✓ Ground meat to make meatballs or meatloaf.
- ✓ Canned chicken and turkey work great for chicken salad.

#### Fish and seafood

- ✓ Baked, broiled, poached or grilled
- ✓ Baby shrimp
- ✓ Imitation or regular crab meat
- ✓ Fresh or canned salmon or tuna in water
- ✓ Sushi

#### Beef or veal (choose extra lean)

- ✓ Ground for meatballs and meatloaf

- ✓ Steaks that come from the loin or round

### **Pork**

- ✓ Shaved deli ham
- ✓ Pork chops – remove all visible fat

### **Eggs or Egg substitutes**

- ✓ Hard boiled eggs
- ✓ Egg salad – with fat-free mayo
- ✓ Crustless quiche
- ✓ Scrambled eggs or omelets

### **Dairy products**

- ✓ Milk (skim or 1%)
- ✓ Cheeses: String cheese, Ricotta, Cheddar, Swiss, Provolone and other solid cheeses
- ✓ Greek yogurt, occasionally

### **Legumes**

- ✓ Dried beans or lentils
- ✓ Hummus
- ✓ Peanut butter - smooth
- ✓ Refried beans - choose Tofu

### **Additional ideas for adding protein to foods**

- ✓ Non-fat milk powder can be added to milk, hot cereal, cream soups, mashed potatoes and casseroles. 1/3 cup = 8 grams of protein.
- ✓ Egg white powder can also be added to foods listed above. 2 Tablespoons *equals* 6 grams of protein. Check labels as protein content can vary by brand.

### **Hints to add variety to your protein drinks**

- ✓ Flavor extracts or spices that do not contain sugar can be added to protein drinks for flavor. EX: vanilla, almond extract, cinnamon and nutmeg.
- ✓ Cocoa powder (not sugar free hot chocolate) can be added to provide a chocolate flavor.

- ✓ Instant decaffeinated coffee can be added to drinks or yogurt for a change of flavor.
- ✓ Sugar-free Tang can be added to vanilla drinks to create an orange creamsicle flavor or try adding to an unflavored protein drink.
- ✓ Sugar-free Kool-Aid or Crystal Light powder can be used to flavor protein drinks.
- ✓ Sugar-free syrups can be added to flavor protein drinks.
- ✓ If a drink tastes too thick or too sweet, try adding more water or low-fat milk.
- ✓ Mixing with milk provides additional protein and calcium.
- ✓ Try freezing your protein drink. This can be consumed with a spoon as a frozen treat. Also can be made into “popsicles”.
- ✓ Try adding ice to your protein drink and blend to make a slushy.
- ✓ Try mixing you protein powder with plain or vanilla yogurt or Greek yogurts.
- ✓ Try mixing protein powder into sugar-free gelatin before it is set up.

### **Daily Vitamins and Minerals**

You are required to take vitamin and mineral supplements every day for the rest of your life. Taking vitamin and mineral supplements are vital to maintain your nutritional health and prevent deficiencies. You are now at greater risk for decreased absorption of vitamins and minerals because you are eating a significantly smaller amount of food in a day.

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*All Vitamin/mineral supplements must be crushed, gummy, chewable or liquid for 6 weeks after surgery or as directed by physician.*

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Select a chewable multivitamin *and* chewable calcium citrate supplement that meets the following requirements:

- ✓ Calcium citrate supplements must provide 1500 – 2000 mg calcium per day. Take 500 – 600 mg of calcium 3 times a day.
- ✓ Multivitamins can be any chewable multivitamin that meets 100% RDA (recommended daily allowance) for adults. If Iron causes issues with constipation, find a multivitamin without iron.
- ✓ Vitamin D3 supplement. You need 2000 IU of vitamin D per day. If it is not included in your calcium supplement you will need to take a separate vitamin D.
- ✓ Vitamin B-12: 1000 mcg per day.
- ✓ Iron: Your physician will monitor your iron and prescribe if necessary.

## Fluids

Drinking liquids with meals or too close to mealtime may cause bloating, nausea, or vomiting. It may also fill up your small stomach pouch so you are not hungry for your meal.

*Remember:*

- ❖ Do not drink liquids for 30 minutes before eating meals (even if pureed meals).
- ❖ Do not drink liquids with your meals.
- ❖ Do not drink liquids for 30-45 minutes after finishing your meal.

However, drink a lot of liquids BETWEEN meals. Fluid intake is very important for prevention of dehydration and constipation; adequate water is essential to help rid the body of waste, maintain proper muscle tone and help reduce sagging skin.

- ✓ Sip on water all day between meals. Don't gulp water. Sucking on ice will also help with fluid intake.
- ✓ Your initial fluid goal should be a minimum of 4 cups (32 ounces) of non-carbonated fluid per day. At least half of this should be water. You should be able to consume this amount within a few days after surgery. Gradually, you want to increase your fluid to at least 8 cups (64 ounces) every day.
- ✓ Do not use a straw. This can cause your stomach to fill with air, causing distention, gas and bloating.
- ✓ Try varying the temperature of liquids for variety and tolerance.
- ✓ Drink low calorie or no calorie beverages. Consuming calorie beverages can decrease weight loss.
- ✓ Most fluids should be non-caloric such as water, Crystal Light, sugar free Kool-Aid, unsweetened teas, PowerAde Zero, Propel, or broth. Avoid all sweetened beverages.
- ✓ Limit caffeine to no more than 4 ounces per day.
- ✓ Avoid all carbonated beverages (including beer and sparkling water).
- ✓ Beware alcoholic beverages do not have nutritional value and may cause weight gain and/or liver damage.

## Sugar and Fat

Foods high in sugar and in fat should be avoided due to the high calorie content. Consuming high calorie foods can slow weight loss and contribute to weight gain.

Be careful to avoid calories from "soft" foods. Soft foods and high calorie liquids are easily tolerated and can contribute to weight gain. This includes items like: chocolate, ice cream, milkshakes, sweetened drinks, and alcoholic beverages.



*Avoid sugar* (this also means honey, syrup, molasses, Agave, and other calorie sweeteners). Avoid foods high in sugar or with sugar added. These items include: candy, sweets, baked goods, frozen desserts, sweetened cereals, regular jams and jellies.

High fat food should be avoided because of the high calorie content. Avoid fried foods. Try to limit added fats such as butter, margarine, cream cheese, lard, regular mayo or spreads, and regular salad dressing. Avoid snack foods like potato chips, cheese curls, and tortilla chips.

Healthy fats are okay in moderation. Olive oil, canola oil, avocado, nut butters and olives should be limited to 3 teaspoons a day.

## **Possible Complications**

### **Nausea / Vomiting**

This is often caused by eating too much, taking too big of a bite, eating too fast, not chewing well enough or dinking liquids with meals. It can also be caused by lying down after meals, or eating foods that may not agree with you. Be sure to eat in a slow, calm manner. Call your doctor if you are having frequent or persistent vomiting.

### **Hair Loss**

Hair loss is a side effect of weight loss surgery. You may not see hair loss/ thinning initially due to the time it takes hair to grow from the root. You will see hair thinning, loss or breakage as the hair grows through the scalp. Often it takes several months after surgery for hair loss to show; and possibly several more months for you to see the hair start growing back.

Hair loss can occur from low protein and zinc intake and from the sudden/ excessive weight loss. You must take a minimum of 60-80 grams of protein a day from food or protein drinks. Adequate protein intake may help reduce (but not prevent) hair loss. If you are meeting the protein intake requirements and hair loss continues, you can try supplementing with zinc (no more than 50 mg per day). On-going hair loss can be a sign of iron-deficiency anemia.

*Telogen effluvium.* This type of hair loss is usually due to a change in your normal hair cycle. It may occur when some type of shock to your system—emotional or physical—causes hair roots to be pushed prematurely into the resting state. The effected growing hairs from these hair roots fall out. In a month or two, the hair follicles will become active again and new hair will start to grow.

Telogen effluvium may follow emotional distress, such as a death in the family or a physiological stress, such as a high fever, sudden or excessive weight loss, extreme diets, nutritional deficiencies, surgery, or metabolic disturbances. Hair typically grows back once the condition that caused it corrects itself, but it will usually take a few months.

### **Constipation**

Constipation after surgery is common, but can be prevented. It is usually due to a decreased intake of fiber containing foods or decrease fluid intake. For some people, iron in the multivitamin can contribute to constipation.

*Tips to prevent constipation:*

- ✓ Drink plenty of fluid (64 ounce or more daily)
- ✓ Exercise regularly
- ✓ Try baby food prunes or unsweetened diluted prune juice or oatmeal.

When your diet progresses to regular foods, you can start eating high fiber foods such as fresh fruits, fresh veggies and beans. Remember to add high fiber foods gradually and chew VERY WELL. Failing to drink plenty of fluids when increasing fiber can lead to constipation. If constipation persists, try a daily fiber supplement. Inulin-based soluble fiber supplements are less prone to cause bloating.

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***If constipation continues, call our office. Do NOT take laxatives without first consulting our physician. Our nurse can be reached at 208-782-3993.***

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