

General Diet Guidelines

The diet after weight loss surgery is designed to limit calorie intake, encourage healthy eating habits, and prevent complications such as staple line disruption or obstruction of the stomach pouch.

Main Focus:

1. Drink adequate amounts of fluid to keep hydrated: Aim for 48-64 oz. per day.
2. Eat adequate amounts of proteins to maintain nutrition: Goal of 60 -70 grams per day
3. Vitamin and mineral supplementation to meet recommended intake.
4. Dietary stages (see below) will be advanced by based on progress under the guidance of your surgeon.

Diet Principles:

1. Drink 48-64 oz. (6-8 cups) of fluid per day.
 - Sip 1 cup (8 oz.) of fluid slowly over one hour.
 - Stop drinking at least 30 minutes before a meal.
 - Restart drinking after 30 minutes of completing a meal.
 - Do not use straws.
 - Avoid carbonated beverages.
2. Eat 3 small meals per day. Do not skip meals.
 - Eat proteins first at each meal to maximize protein intake.
 - Avoid high calorie foods and snacks.
 - Eat slowly. Each meal should last approximately 30 minutes.
 - Chew foods thoroughly (up to 25 times per bite) to prevent blockages or discomfort.
 - Avoid distractions such as television or telephone while eating.
3. Stop drinking or eating as soon as you feel a sense of fullness in the upper stomach or behind the chest.
4. Avoid high calorie drinks such as sodas, milkshakes, undiluted fruit drinks, alcohol, and sweetened ice tea. These will give you a lot of calories and limit weight loss, and even result in weight gain.

5. Avoid high calorie foods and sweets such as chips, french fries, cake, cookies, ice cream and candy. These can also limit weight loss and result in weight gain.
6. Substitute sugar with low calorie sweeteners such as Splenda or Equal.
7. Vitamins are started in the post-operative period under the guidance of your surgeon. Vitamin and mineral supplementation may include multivitamins, calcium, iron, vitamin B12, zinc and biotin. The vitamin requirements will be dependent on the type of surgery and based on blood results.
8. The diet is advanced through the following stages under the guidance of your surgeon:
 - Clear liquid diet (in hospital)
 - Full liquid diet (first 2 weeks)
 - Pureed diet (2-4 weeks)
 - Soft diet (4-8 weeks)
 - Regular diet (8 weeks after surgery)

Diet Stages:

Clear Liquid Diet (in hospital)

1. This stage occurs during the hospital stay. You will be provided with trays that consist of clear liquids. The goal is to sip liquids slowly and get accustomed to having small portions.
2. Sip 30-60 ml per hour and stop if there is a sense of fullness.
3. Liquids are best taken at room temperature as extremes of cold or heat can result in stomach discomfort
4. Examples of clear liquids:
 - Water, diluted fruit juices, low calorie or diet juices, eg., apple, grape
 - Soup broths (chicken, vegetable)
 - Sugar-free popsicles, sugar-free gelatin, sugar-free Kool-Aid, Crystal Light, diet Snapple, Gatorade, decaffeinated tea or coffee

Full Liquid Diet (first 2 weeks at home)

1. Full liquids are taken for the first 2 weeks after surgery.

2. Protein drinks are added at this stage and used for meals.
3. Drink protein drinks slowly over 30 minutes. Aim for 2 oz. ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) per meal. Stop when you feel satisfied or full.
4. You may have to do several (4-5) small portions of protein drinks to get the goal of 60 -70 grams of protein per day.
5. Slowly sip 6-8 cups of fluid throughout the day between protein drinks.

Pureed diet (2-4 weeks)

1. The pureed diet phase starts 2 weeks after surgery and lasts for 2-4 weeks.
2. Foods should be cut into small pieces and blended to a baby food consistency. Blend with fat-free milk or fat-free gravies as needed to get the baby food consistencies.
3. Each meal should be 2-4 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{8}$ – $\frac{1}{4}$ cup). Chew thoroughly (up to 25 times per bite) and stop if feeling satisfied or full.
4. Consume proteins first to ensure adequate protein intake (60-70 grams per day). Protein shakes may be substituted for morning meals if necessary.
5. Continue drinking 48-64 oz. (6-8 cups) of fluids throughout the day between meals to keep hydrated.

Soft diet (4-8 weeks)

1. Approximately 4 weeks after surgery, soft foods are introduced to the diet. At this stage foods will no longer need to be blended.
2. Soft foods can generally be cut with the side of a fork or spoon.
3. Meats should be prepared by baking, broiling, grilling or pouching. Broth, fat-free gravies, and fat-free milk can be used to moisten the meats.
4. Meats should be soft, moist and tender.
5. Introduce foods one at a time to determine your tolerance.

6. You may be able to eat larger portions but you should still stop if you feel satisfied or full. Proteins should still be first to get the required 60-70 grams of proteins per day.
7. Continue to drink 48-64 oz. (6-8 cups) of fluid throughout the day between meals to keep hydrated.

Regular diet (8 weeks after surgery)

1. At 8 weeks after weight loss surgery, patients should be on a balanced healthy diet.
2. Follow the general dietary guidelines (please review general diet guidelines frequently during this stage).
3. 3 healthy meals per day
4. Eat proteins first for a daily intake of 60-70 grams per day.
5. Hydrate well with 48-64 oz. of fluid per day.