Nutrition Guidelines for Sleeve Gastrectomy and Gastric Bypass
We designed this book to help you, your family, and your friends understand how eating will change after surgery. It is important to commit to healthy lifestyle habits for the rest of your life to be successful with surgery. It is still possible for people to overeat and gain weight after bariatric surgery. We hope the guidelines in this book and the support from our team will help you to have a healthy and happy life after surgery.

In this book, you will find:

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You will meet with a dietitian several times before and after surgery. You can have extra appointments if desired.

Typical Dietitian Appointment Schedule
Individual appointments are 30 minutes; groups and classes are 45-60 minutes.

Before Surgery:
✓ Nutrition Class
☐ Nutrition Assessment
☐ Nutrition Follow-Ups as needed

After Surgery
☐ 2-3 week group after surgery
☐ 3 months
☐ 6 months
☐ 9 months
☐ 1 year
☐ After 1 year, meet with dietitian twice per year (every 6 months) forever
There are two main ways that gastric bypass and sleeve gastrectomy will help you to lose weight and become healthier.

- **Restriction** – Your smaller stomach will limit how much food you can eat in one sitting. The restriction will decrease over time so you will need to rely on healthy lifestyle habits.
- **Metabolic Changes** – Stomach hormones and some other signals in your body change after surgery. This can make people feel less hungry and can help with health conditions like diabetes. Your body can adapt to this change in gut hormones over time and you will probably feel hunger again.

You are usually in the hospital for 1-2 nights after gastric bypass or sleeve gastrectomy.

**Dumping Syndrome**

About half of gastric bypass patients will have dumping syndrome. Dumping syndrome is the body’s reaction to eating and drinking foods and beverages with added sugar, such as cakes, cookies, candies, juice, and soda. The foods or beverages pass too quickly through the stomach pouch. This causes symptoms such as nausea, cramping, cold sweats, dizziness, extreme tiredness, and an increase in heart rate. Usually the symptoms will stop in 1-2 hours. Lying down can help patients to recover. Eating high-fat foods, such as fried foods, causes similar symptoms.

Sleeve gastrectomy patients usually do not have dumping syndrome. However, all patients are encouraged to avoid foods and beverages with added sugar and high-fat foods.
Bariatric surgery is only a tool. You must commit to a healthy lifestyle (diet, exercise, behaviors) to stay successful forever.

**Fluids**
Choose sugar-free, non-carbonated fluids.
Sip fluids throughout the day, aiming for 48-64 ounces.
Know the signs of dehydration: headaches, dizziness, dark urine.
No caffeine until stage 4.
Avoid alcohol 6-12 months after surgery.

**Eating Behaviors**
Take bites the size of a dime.
Chew, chew, chew; puree the food with your teeth.
Wait between bites to see how your stomach feels.
Aim for 30-40 minute meals.

**Make Eating Mindful**
Avoid grazing, nibbling, and picking throughout the day.
Have regularly scheduled eating events.
When you're eating, just eat! Avoid distractions.
Eat off a smaller plate.

**Separate Fluids from Solids**
Wait to drink fluids until 30 minutes after you eat solid food.
It's okay to drink before eating.
*Why?* Eating and drinking at the same time can overfill your stomach and make you feel sick.

**Plan Ahead**
Life is busy now and it will be busy after surgery too.
You will make healthier choices when you plan ahead.
Chop/peel ingredients in advance and meal prep.
Pack food and fluids for busy days.
Bring your own food to social events if you aren't sure what will be served.

**Stay Accountable**
Track yourself: food and beverage choices, exercise, and weight are good places to start.
Keep your appointments with the CMBS team.
Let your support team know how they can help you stay on track.
Most people need to exercise at least 250 minutes (over 4 hours) each week to maintain weight loss. It takes time to build up to that amount of exercise but start where you’re at. You can even break your exercise up into smaller amounts of time during the day. Remember, find an activity you enjoy!

**Here are some ideas for increasing your physical activity before and after surgery.** *

- ✓ Walk more! You may start walking immediately after surgery.
- ✓ Make exercise a family event. Go for a walk together after dinner or on the weekend.
- ✓ Keep exercise clothes in your car to make sure you will go to the gym.
- ✓ To decrease impact on your joints, try pool exercises, water aerobics, or a stationary bicycle.*
  - o Please refrain from swimming until your first appointment after surgery.
- ✓ Turn up the music and dance.
- ✓ Do yard work, gardening, or household chores that require brisk movement.
- ✓ Check out exercise videos online.
- ✓ Try chair exercises.
- ✓ Check out a new exercise class.

**What are the benefits of exercise besides weight control?**

- Improves mood
- Keeps body strong
- Boosts energy
- Promotes better sleep
- Improves bone health
- Improves heart health

**Consider using the FITT principle to progress in your physical routine.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Intensity</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often you perform these exercises.</td>
<td>How hard you are exercising.</td>
<td>How long are you exercising for?</td>
<td>This refers to the type of exercise you do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start with 1-2 times per week and increase up to 3 times per week.</td>
<td>Instead of resting between exercises, go through an entire set of each exercise of the above routine then repeat 2-3 more times! Or, to progress, increase the weight as you are able.</td>
<td>Try to build up to the recommended amount of exercise.</td>
<td>Try to achieve a balance throughout your week of both aerobic and strength training exercise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Check with your surgeon before starting any strenuous exercise.*
What to Buy Before Surgery

- Measuring Cups & Spoons
- Food Scale
- Sugar-free Fluids
- Protein Shakes*
- Vitamin & Mineral Supplements*

*Choose protein shakes and vitamin & mineral supplements from the shopping guides.

Getting Ready for Surgery

Diet Progression Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3A</th>
<th>Stage 3B</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluids</td>
<td>Protein Shakes</td>
<td>Smooth Foods</td>
<td>Soft Foods</td>
<td>Regular Textures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Date to start:
  - Day 0-1 while in hospital
  - Day 1-2 while in hospital
  - Day 10
  - Day 20
  - Start on day 40 after surgery

*May start pill form of vitamins if desired
*No alcohol for at least 6-12 months
Post-Op Diet Stage 1: Fluids

Starts: In the hospital on either the day of surgery or the first day after surgery.

Date to start: ________

Lasts for: Up to 1 day

What to do: Sip sugar-free, non-carbonated, non-caffeinated fluids throughout the day.

Examples of fluids:
- Water
- Crystal Light, MiO, or other sugar-free flavorings
- Decaf coffee and tea
- Broth
- Fruit-flavored water (Hint Water or homemade by floating fruit in water)
- Sugar-free Jell-o
- Sugar-free popsicles
- Sugar-free sports drinks (PowerAde Zero, Propel, Gatorade Zero)
  - G2 only recommended with severe diarrhea and vomiting

You will be in the hospital for this entire diet stage and you will be given the right types of fluids. The nurses will guide you to sip enough fluids during the day.

Stage 1 Key Points:
- Fluids are the number one priority.
- You will only be able to sip small amounts of fluid at one time. Pace yourself throughout the day.
- Gulping and chugging fluids will cause stomach pain.
- Avoid caffeine until Stage 4. It irritates the stomach.
- Carbonation can cause gas, belching, bloating, and stomach discomfort. Some people never tolerate carbonation after surgery.
- You can use artificial sweeteners such as Equal (Aspartame), Sweet & Low (Saccharin), Splenda (Sucralose), PureVia and Truvia (Stevia), and Nectresse (monk fruit).
- If you are experiencing gas pain or discomfort, try walking around.
For example, 8 ounces of skim milk has:

- 8 grams protein
- 90 calories
- 12 grams sugar

**Starts:** In the hospital on either the first or second day after surgery.

**Date to start:** _________

**Lasts for:** 8-9 days

**What to do:**
1. Sip fluids throughout the day.
2. Drink a protein shake 3-4 times per day.
   - If you haven’t finished the protein shake after one hour, stop drinking it.
   - Fluids are more important than protein shakes.

**Fluid Goal:** minimum 48-64 ounces (fluid guidelines listed in stage 1). This does not include protein shakes.

**Protein Goal:** minimum 60-70 grams (number of shakes per day depends on brand of protein shake). It is normal to not reach your fluid and protein goals right away. Just do your best each day.

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**Protein Shake Nutrition Guidelines**

Each protein shake* should have:

- at least 15 grams of protein
- 100-200 calories
- less than 20 grams of sugar

* A typical protein shake is 8-11 ounces.

Here is where you’ll find these numbers on a nutrition fact label:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serving Size (47g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servings Per Container</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories from Fat 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Daily Value*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat 3g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat 2g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat 0g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol 95mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium 150mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate 8g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber 2g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars 3g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein 30g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium 20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are using a protein powder, remember to add the protein, calories, and sugar from the liquid you are mixing with.

For example, 8 ounces of skim milk has:

- 8 grams protein
- 90 calories
- 12 grams sugar
Lactose Intolerance:
Lactose is the natural sugar in milk. Sometimes after surgery, your body cannot digest this sugar. This causes problems like nausea, cramping, bloating, gas, and/or diarrhea. It is not normal to have these problems from drinking protein shakes. You might be experiencing lactose intolerance.

What if you are experiencing lactose intolerance?
- Stop drinking protein shakes for 24 hours. Keep drinking your fluids.
- When you start drinking protein shakes again, avoid any shakes that have milk, ‘whey protein concentrate,’ or ‘milk protein concentrate’ in the ingredient list.
- Instead, choose a protein shake that is made from ‘whey protein isolate.’ The lactose has been filtered out of whey protein isolate.
- Call your dietitian if you need help finding lactose-free options.

Other problems related to Protein Shakes?

If the taste is bothering you:
- Flavor your shakes with extracts. You can find extracts in the baking aisle at the grocery store. You only need a couple drops so go slowly and taste-test along the way.
- Flavor your shakes with sugar-free syrups. You can find sugar-free syrups at the grocery store but you will have more flavor options if you order online. Common brands are Da Vinci Gourmet and Torani.
- Flavor your shakes with spices such as cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves.
- Flavor your shakes with unsweetened cocoa powder or powdered peanut butter; limit to 1 tablespoon total per day.

If the smell is bothering you:
- Drink your shake from a bottle with a small opening.
- Drink your shake using a straw.
- Drink your shake at a very cold temperature.

If you need to chew:
- Pour your protein shake into a popsicle or ice cube tray and freeze to make a protein popsicle.
- Semi-freeze your protein shake or blend it with ice to make a slushy.

Stage 2 Key Points:
- Be aware of signs of dehydration: sudden lightheadedness or dizziness, headaches, and urine color becoming darker throughout the day.
- If you’re struggling to tolerate fluids, it’s helpful to try different temperatures for your beverages. Some patients prefer ice cold while others prefer room temperature or warmer beverages. You can try warming up a protein shake up to 140 degrees; think “hot chocolate” or look for chicken and tomato soup flavored protein (see the Protein Shake Shopping Guide for more details).
- Keep track of the amount of protein shakes and fluids that you are drinking using a food log. If you cannot finish a protein shake in a 1 hour period, you can save it for the next meal time and log the amount you drank.
- Changes in bowel regimens, such as less frequent movements or loose stools, are normal. If you are having discomfort, contact the bariatric team or refer to page 27 for troubleshooting tips and solutions.
Post-Op Diet Stage 3A: Smooth Textures

Starts: 10 days after your surgery date

Date to start: __________

Lasts for: 10 days

What to Do:

1. Keep sipping fluids.
2. Have a protein shake or eat a protein food 5-6 times per day.
3. Start taking vitamin and mineral supplements.

Fluid Goal: minimum 48-64 ounces (fluid guidelines listed in stage 1)

Protein Goal: minimum 60-70 grams/day

Protein Foods
- Fat-free Greek yogurt (without fruit chunks)
- Low-fat cottage cheese
- Part-skim ricotta cheese
- Tofu
- Vegetarian refried beans (black or pinto)
- Egg whites or egg beaters (no whole eggs)
- Protein shakes and powders

Non-Protein Foods
- Fat-free or light yogurt
- Unsweetened applesauce
- Canned pears or peaches (in own juice or water; no syrup)
- Soft banana
- Oatmeal, cream of wheat, or farina
- Sugar-free pudding

How to Count Grams of Protein
This is a container of Greek yogurt. The label says that the serving size is 3/4 cup. That means that each serving has 13 grams of protein. If you eat the whole serving, you have eaten 13 grams of protein. However, with your small stomach, you might not have room for the whole serving. If you eat half of the container, you have eaten 6.5 grams of protein.

Try to meet the protein goal of 60-70 grams each day before choosing foods from the non-protein list. Your stomach will fill up quickly from the protein foods so you might not have room for the non-protein foods.

Nutrition Facts

Serving size 3/4 cup (170g)

Calories 190

Total Fat 10g 13%
Saturated Fat 8g 40%
Trans Fat 0g
Cholesterol 45mg 15%
Sodium 75mg 3%
Total Carbohydrate 12g 4%
Dietary Fiber 0g 0%
Total Sugars 8g
Includes 0g Added Sugars 0%
Protein 13g

Vitamin D 0mcg 0%
Calcium 261mg 20%
Iron 1mg 4%
Potassium 343mg 8%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

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Stage 3A Key Points:

- Remember to stay hydrated but avoid drinking while eating. Wait 30 minutes after eating to drink.
- Aim to eat something every 3-4 hours. You might not feel hungry, but you still need to eat regularly.
- Try to space out your eating events evenly during the day.
- Some days you won’t have room for everything. Do your best to reach your protein goal.
- Stop eating or drinking at the first sign of fullness. “Fullness” may feel like chest pressure, runny nose, hiccups, watery eyes, or nausea.
- Keep track of how much you are eating and drinking using a food log (journal, apps, etc.). See page 22 for an example.
- Seasonings and spices are fine. You don’t need to eat bland foods.

Example Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eating Event</th>
<th>Food or Protein Shake</th>
<th>Grams Protein</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decaf Macho Mocha Cinnamon Shake*</td>
<td>28 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>¼ cup Key Lime Custard*</td>
<td>7 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5 ounces pan-fried tofu</td>
<td>6 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>¼ cup oatmeal cooked with ¼ scoop protein powder</td>
<td>7 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>¼ cup cottage cheese with chive</td>
<td>7 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>¼ cup Chocolate Almond Bliss with ricotta cheese*</td>
<td>7 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>62 grams</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ask your dietitian for these recipes or find them on our website: www.brighamandwomens.org/cmbs
Vitamin and Mineral Supplements:
You will need to take vitamin and mineral supplements for the rest of your life after surgery. We recommend that you start with chewable or liquid supplements until stage 4. Over time, if you are comfortable swallowing a ‘petite’ tablet or cutting a pill in half, you can swallow your supplements.

Multivitamin with Minerals:
- Take a ‘complete’ multivitamin(s) daily; dose will vary based on brand of multivitamin.
- Complete multivitamins contain iron, zinc, folic acid, and copper.
- Avoid gummy multivitamins – these don’t have all the right nutrients.
- Separate multivitamin(s) with iron from calcium by at least 2 hours.

Vitamin B₁₂:
- Take 350-500 micrograms vitamin B₁₂ daily in the form of a tablet or liquid.
- You can take vitamin B₁₂ at any time or with any other supplements.
- You can also get vitamin B₁₂ in a nasal spray or injection.
- Your multivitamin might have enough vitamin B₁₂ in it. This will be listed on your shopping guide.

Calcium Citrate with Vitamin D:
- Take 1200-1500 mg of calcium citrate daily split into 2-3 doses.
  - Your body can only absorb 600 mg of calcium at one time.
  - Check serving size on calcium nutrition facts label to determine how many to take at one time.
  - Separate calcium doses by at least 4 hours.
- Separate multivitamin(s) with iron from calcium by at least 2 hours.
- You can also meet your daily calcium needs from food and supplements. Talk to your dietitian.

Other Supplements:
Some patients may need extra vitamins and minerals, such as iron, vitamin D, or B vitamins. We will check your vitamin and mineral levels regularly through lab tests and discuss extra supplements as needed.

Here are three suggestions for separating your supplements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario 1</th>
<th>Scenario 2</th>
<th>Your Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast - Multivitamin(s) &amp; Vitamin B₁₂</td>
<td>Calcium+D</td>
<td>Time _____ Vitamin_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait at least 2 hours</td>
<td>Wait at least 2 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch – Calcium+D</td>
<td>Multivitamin(s) + Vitamin B₁₂</td>
<td>Time _____ Vitamin_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait at least 4 hours</td>
<td>Wait at least 2 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner – Calcium+D</td>
<td>Calcium+D</td>
<td>Time _____ Vitamin_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait at least 4 hours</td>
<td>Wait at least 4 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedtime – Calcium+D</td>
<td>Calcium+D</td>
<td>Time _____ Vitamin_________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Post-Op Diet Stage 3B: Soft Textures

**Starts:** 20 days after your surgery date

**Date to start:** ________

**Lasts for:** At least 21 days / 3 weeks

Your stomach has not fully healed yet, stay on Stage 3B for at least 3 weeks.

**What to Do:** Keep sipping fluids. Have a protein shake or eat a protein food 5-6 times per day. Keep taking vitamin and mineral supplements. Please eat only foods listed on this page and in past stages.

**Fluid Goal:** minimum 48-64 ounces daily (fluid guidelines listed in stage 1)

**Protein Goal:** minimum 60-70 grams/day

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#### Food Choices in Stage 3B

##### Protein Foods
- Fat-free Greek yogurt (without fruit chunks)
- Low-fat cottage cheese
- Part-skim ricotta cheese
- Tofu
- Chicken or turkey (dark meat is fine)
- Fish (flaky fish like tuna, cod, haddock, salmon, and tilapia)
- Egg, egg whites, or egg beaters
- Soy-based veggie burger
- Beans and lentils
- Protein shakes or powders

##### Non-Protein Foods
- Fat-free or light yogurt (non-Greek)
- Unsweetened applesauce
- Canned pears or peaches (in own juice or water; no syrup)
- Soft banana
- Oatmeal, cream of wheat, or farina
- Tomato sauce
- Well-cooked vegetables (non-starchy or starchy) with no skins or peels
- Reduced-fat or light cheese

##### Fats
- Light mayonnaise or salad dressing
- Hummus
- Avocado
- Smooth nut butter (not crunchy)
- Butter or oil

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#### Example Plate – it might be this small!

- **Protein Foods** – Eat these first.
- **Fat or Condiment**
- **Non-Protein Foods** – You may be too full for these.

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#### How to Count Grams of Protein

(if the food does not have a nutrition facts label)

7 grams of protein is equal to:

- 1 ounce chicken/turkey/fish
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup egg substitute
- 2 oz firm tofu/3 oz soft tofu
- ½ cup beans

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Here are some examples of eating events in stage 3B. You will receive recipe ideas from the dietitian and you can find them on the CMBS website: www.brighamandwomens.org/cmbs.

- 1.5 ounces tuna
- 1 Tablespoon light mayo
- 1 egg
- 1 Tablespoon oatmeal
- ¼ cup non-fat refried beans
- 1 Tablespoon melted cheese
- 1 Tablespoon avocado
- 1.5 ounces Turkey Chili (made with ground turkey, beans, and stewed tomatoes)

Seasonings and spices are fine! You don’t need to eat bland food. It just needs to be soft.
Stage 3B Key Points:

- Think “fork-mashable” for the appropriate texture. If the food can be mashed completely with a fork, it’s probably soft enough for this stage.

- Food can get ‘stuck’ in your chest. If this happens, don’t panic and don’t drink water. Stay calm, move around, and it will pass. Afterwards, think about what might have gone wrong...
  - Ate too fast? Take 30 minutes for each eating event and pause after each bite.
  - Didn’t chew enough? Chew until your food is pureed by your teeth.
  - Food too tough? Make sure you are only eating stage 3A and 3B foods.
  - Stomach too full? Fullness can feel like chest pressure or nausea.
  - Food too dry? Dry foods are hard to tolerate. Keep meat tender and moist.
    - Use a slow cooker, marinate meats, cook in foil packets, avoid over-cooking.
    - Add broth when reheating meat in the microwave to keep it moist.

- Dehydration can still happen. You are likely getting back to your daily routine and will be busy with your scheduled eating times. Remember to drink your fluids in between eating times.

- You might not feel hungry but you still need to eat regularly. Space your eating events evenly during the day, about every 3-4 hours. Set reminders or timers if you’re forgetting to eat.

- Some days you won’t have room for everything. Do your best to reach your protein goal.

- It’s normal to not tolerate certain textures the first time you try them. If you have trouble with a food even when you are eating very carefully, avoid the food for 2-3 weeks before trying again.
Post-Op Diet Stage 4: Regular Textures

**Starts:** 40 days after your surgery date – Only if meeting protein goals regularly in Stage 3B

**Date to start:** __________

**Last for:** Forever, but your meal plan will change over time.

**What to Do:** Keep sipping fluids. Use the meal plan below as guidance for a balanced diet. Keep taking vitamin and mineral supplements.

**Fluid Goal:** minimum 48-64 ounces (fluid guidelines listed in stage 1)

**Protein Goal:** minimum 60-70 grams/day

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**Meal Plan**

- 8 cups of fluid ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8 protein servings ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- 2 vegetable servings ☐ ☐
- 2 fruit servings ☐ ☐
- 1 dairy serving ☐
- 2 fat servings ☐ ☐
- 3 starch servings ☐ ☐ ☐

Refer to pages 21-26 for serving sizes in each food group.

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**How do I start in Stage 4?**

- In Stage 4, you will start trying new types of foods. You may not tolerate every food you try so be patient with your stomach. Tolerance improves with time. See below for possible ‘problem foods.’

- Use the meal plan for guidance. Each checkbox is a serving of food from that food group. In the early months after surgery, you won’t have room for all of the foods in the meal plan. Focus on foods from the protein, vegetable, and fruit groups first.

- The meal plan is not one size fits all. Your dietitian will help you change your meal plan as needed.

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**Possible ‘Problem Foods’**

Your stomach can be sensitive for 3-6 months after surgery, and sometimes longer. The following foods have unique textures that may be difficult to tolerate if eaten too soon. Be cautious!

**Protein:** Tough red meat, hamburger, lobster, scallops, clams, shrimp

**Fruits:** Stringy, thick skins, peels (like oranges, grapes, pineapple)

**Vegetables:** Stringy, fibrous (like asparagus, peapods, celery, lettuces)

**Starches:** Rice, pasta, doughy breads, popcorn

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Stage 4 Key Points

Eat protein foods first, then vegetables or fruits, and eat starches last. Use fats as a flavoring or to keep foods moist.

This will be lifelong!
Use your “Stage 4 Meal Ideas” handout for recipe ideas.

Self-monitor
Track protein and fluids. Tracking regularly will help you stay accountable and more consistent with meeting your goals.

Listen to your stomach
Stop eating at the first sign of fullness, which may feel like pressure in your upper chest, nausea, runny nose, or hiccups.

Hunger may increase
This is normal. The hormone changes from surgery might not last forever.
Foods high in protein and fiber help control hunger so fill up on these foods. Avoid eating out of habit or from behavioral triggers like boredom, stress, and emotions.

Be aware of picking or grazing
Are you eating something just because it’s available to you? Avoid unplanned eating moments and try to control your environment to minimize these opportunities. Have scheduled and structured eating times. Meal prep and planning can also help minimize unplanned eating.

Work towards a balanced diet
Learn which food groups the foods you eat belong to: Protein, Vegetable, Starch, etc.

Work towards keeping these foods within the meal plan outlined by your dietitian.
Sample Meal Plans
These are examples to show you how the amount you can eat will change over time. Each person can choose their own foods based on their preferences and their tolerance.

Just starting Stage 4 – about 6 weeks after surgery

8 cups of fluid

8 protein servings
2 vegetable servings
2 fruit servings
1 dairy serving
2 fat servings
3 starch servings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Fluid (oz)</th>
<th>Protein (g)</th>
<th>Vitamins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 AM</td>
<td>1 ½ scrambled eggs (1 ½ protein), ¼ banana (½ fruit)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Multivitamin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 AM</td>
<td>8 oz decaf tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 AM</td>
<td>3 oz fat-free Greek yogurt (1 protein), ½ cup strawberries (½ fruit)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75 mg calcium from food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 AM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PM</td>
<td>Homemade chili made with 1 oz turkey (1 protein), ¼ cup stewed tomatoes (½ vegetable), 1 tablespoon avocado (1 fat)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>500 mg calcium supplement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PM</td>
<td>8 oz Crystal Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 PM</td>
<td>1 scoop protein powder (2 ½ protein) in 8 oz skim milk (1 dairy)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>300 mg calcium from food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 PM</td>
<td>8 oz tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 PM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 PM</td>
<td>1 oz fish (1 protein), ¼ cup cooked green beans (½ vegetable)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>500 mg calcium supplement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 PM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 PM</td>
<td>8 oz Crystal Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 PM</td>
<td>¼ cup ricotta cheese (1 protein)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75 mg calcium from food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 PM</td>
<td>8 oz tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>64 oz</td>
<td>64 grams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feeling comfortable with Stage 4 – about 8 months post-op

8 cups of fluid ✗✗✗✗✗✗✗✗✗

8 protein servings ✗✗✗✗✗✗✗✗✗
2 vegetable servings ✗ ✗
2 fruit servings ✗ ✗
1 dairy serving ✗
2 fat servings ✗ ✗
3 starch servings ✗ ✗ ✗

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Liquid (oz)</th>
<th>Protein (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 AM</td>
<td>1 scoop protein powder (2 ½ protein) in 8 oz skim milk (1 dairy)</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 AM</td>
<td>8 oz decaf tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 AM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 PM</td>
<td>1.5 oz tuna (1.5 protein), 1 cup salad vegetables (lettuce, tomatoes, onion, cucumber) (1 vegetable), 1 Tbsp light dressing (1 fat)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PM</td>
<td>8 oz Crystal Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 PM</td>
<td>6 oz Greek yogurt (2 protein)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 PM</td>
<td>8 oz decaf tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 PM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 PM</td>
<td>1 oz ground turkey (1 protein), ¼ cup beans (½ protein, ½ starch), ½ cup stewed tomatoes (1 vegetable)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 PM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 PM</td>
<td>8 oz Crystal Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 PM</td>
<td>¼ cup roasted chickpeas (½ protein, ½ starch), 2 clementines (1 fruit)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 PM</td>
<td>8 oz decaf tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>64 oz</td>
<td>67 grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Long-term Stage 4 – About 2 years post-op

8 cups of fluid

8 protein servings
2 vegetable servings
2 fruit servings
1 dairy serving
2 fat servings
3 starch servings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Liquid (oz)</th>
<th>Protein (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 AM</td>
<td>6 oz Greek yogurt (2 protein), ½ banana (1 fruit), ½ cup bran flakes (1 starch)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 AM</td>
<td>8 oz decaf tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 AM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 AM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 PM</td>
<td>3 oz chicken (3 protein), lettuce, tomato, onion (1/2 vegetable), 1 sandwich thin (1 starch), 1 tablespoon avocado (1 fat)</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PM</td>
<td>8 oz Crystal Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 PM</td>
<td>8 oz tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 PM</td>
<td>½ cup cottage cheese (2 protein), 1 cup blueberries (1 fruit), 2 tablespoons sliced almonds (1 fat)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 PM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 PM</td>
<td>8 oz water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 PM</td>
<td>2 oz lean ground turkey meatballs (2 protein), 1/2 cup whole wheat pasta (1 starch), ¼ cup tomato sauce (1/2 vegetable), ½ cup wilted spinach (1 vegetable), ¼ cup light mozzarella (1 dairy)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 PM</td>
<td>8 oz Crystal Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 PM</td>
<td>8 oz tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>64 oz</td>
<td>63 grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Your Meal Plan

Use this meal planning worksheet to plan your eating events or track your food intake. Keep track of fluid and protein to help hit your minimum goals of 64 ounces fluid and 60-70 grams protein.

8 cups of fluid □ □ □ □ □ □ □

8 protein servings □ □ □ □ □ □ □
2 vegetable servings □ □
2 fruit servings □ □
1 dairy serving □
2 fat servings □ □
3 starch servings □ □ □

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Liquid (oz)</th>
<th>Protein (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>oz</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Protein Foods

Each protein food contains 7 grams of protein per serving. You may eat multiple servings at a time.

- Choose lower fat protein foods (like skinless chicken breast, 99% fat free ground turkey).
- Limit red meat (beef, lamb, pork).
- Processed meats can increase a person’s risk of colorectal and stomach cancer. Processed meats include hot dogs, pepperoni, salami, sausages, corned beef, ham, bacon, pastrami, and any other meats that have been cured, smoked, salted or treated with any chemical preservatives. The dietitian can provide you with more information about processed meats.

Remember to meet 8 protein servings every day (which is about 60-70 g of protein daily)!
Non-Starchy Vegetables

Each vegetable serving contains 5 grams or less of carbohydrates and 2-3 grams of fiber per serving.

*Fresh and frozen vegetables are ready to eat! Rinse canned vegetables to remove some salt.*

1 serving of vegetables = ½ cup cooked vegetables or 1 cup raw vegetables

Examples of non-starchy vegetables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-starchy Vegetables</th>
<th>Starchy Vegetables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artichoke</td>
<td>Lettuce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>Onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Peppers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels Sprouts</td>
<td>Radishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Salad Greens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Spinach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>Sprouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>Snap Peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td>Summer Squash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>Tomato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Beans</td>
<td>Water Chestnuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale</td>
<td>Zucchini</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Starchy vegetables (corn, peas, potatoes, plantains, winter squash) are found on the Starches List (page 26).

Aim for at least 2 servings of non-starchy vegetables every day!
Fruits

Each fruit serving contains 15 grams of carbohydrates and 2 or more grams of fiber.

Use fresh, frozen or canned fruits with no sugar added.
Eat fruit in its whole form instead of blending or juicing. Whole fruit will fill you up more!

**Fresh, Frozen, & Unsweetened Canned Fruit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit (or amount)</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apple (2 in. across)</td>
<td>1 apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applesauce (unsweetened)</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots (canned)</td>
<td>½ cup or 4 halves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots (medium, fresh)</td>
<td>4 apricots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana (8 in. long)</td>
<td>½ banana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackberries</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueberries</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantaloupe</td>
<td>1 cup cubes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries (canned)</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries (fresh)</td>
<td>12 cherries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figs (fresh)</td>
<td>2 figs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapefruit (medium)</td>
<td>½ grapefruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapefruit (segments)</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>15 grapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honeydew melon</td>
<td>1 cup cubes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi</td>
<td>1 kiwi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin oranges</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango</td>
<td>½ mango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nectarine (2 ½ in. across)</td>
<td>1 nectarine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange (2 ½ in. across)</td>
<td>1 orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papaya</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach (fresh)</td>
<td>1 peach or ¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches (canned)</td>
<td>½ cup (2 halves)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pear (fresh)</td>
<td>½ large or 1 small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears (canned)</td>
<td>½ cup or 2 halves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persimmon</td>
<td>2 persimmons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple (canned)</td>
<td>1/3 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple (fresh)</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum</td>
<td>2 plums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomegranate</td>
<td>½ of fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries (whole)</td>
<td>1 ¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangerine (clementines)</td>
<td>2 tangerines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td>1 ¼ cup cubes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Every fruit & amount listed on this page = 1 serving of fruit**

**Dried Fruit (no added sugar)**

Serving sizes for dried fruits are small because they are calorie-dense foods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>4 rings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>7 halves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>2 ½ medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figs</td>
<td>1 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prunes</td>
<td>3 medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raisins</td>
<td>2 Tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried cranberries</td>
<td>2 Tablespoons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Aim for 2 servings of fruit every day!**

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### Dairy

Each serving of dairy contains 6-8 grams of protein. Watch out for added sugars!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 serving of dairy</th>
<th>=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 oz skim / fat-free milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 oz 1% / low-fat milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 oz Lactaid / lactose-free milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 oz soy milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ cup evaporated skim milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3 cup dry nonfat milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup nonfat yogurt (non-Greek)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 oz cheese*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ cup shredded cheese*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 string cheese*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Choose reduced-fat, part-skim, or light when possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aim for 1 serving of dairy every day!
Fat

Each serving of fat contains 5 grams of fat. Conversion tip: 1 Tablespoon = 3 teaspoons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 serving of fat</th>
<th>2 teaspoons of nut butter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 tablespoon avocado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 teaspoon butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 tablespoon light tub margarine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 teaspoon mayonnaise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 tablespoon light mayonnaise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 teaspoon oil (olive, canola)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 small or 5 large olives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 teaspoons creamy salad dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 tablespoon light creamy dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 tablespoon oil-based dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 tablespoons light salad dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 tablespoons of hummus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 almonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 whole pecans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 small peanuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 whole walnuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 teaspoon pumpkin seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 tablespoon other nuts and seeds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Limit to 2-3 servings of fat every day!
Starches
Each serving contains 15 grams of carbohydrates.

Every food & amount listed on this page = 1 serving of starch

Cooked Beans/Peas/Legumes
(also count as 1 protein)

Beans and legumes (kidney, pinto, black, lentils, chickpeas, black-eyed peas)…………………½ cup
Baked beans…………………………………….¼ cup

Breads
Bagel (from cafe)…………………………………¼ (1 oz)
Bagel (pre-packaged, grocery store)½ (1 oz)
Bread sticks………………………………………2 (2/3 oz)
English muffin……………………………………½
Hamburger or hot dog bun………………….½ (1 oz)
Pita, 6 in. across……………………………………½
Plain roll, small…………………………………1 (1 oz)
Bread………………………………………………1 slice (1 oz)
Tortilla, 6 in. across…………………………….1
Sandwich thins/deli flats…………………………1

Cereals/Grains/Pasta
Cold cereals (unsweetened)…………………¾ cup
Bran cereals………………………………………1/3 cup
Bran cereals (flaked)………………………………½ cup
Granola……………………………………………2 Tbsp
Shredded wheat…………………………………½ cup
Bulgar (cooked)…………………………………½ cup
Hot cereals (unsweetened)………………….½ cup
Grits (cooked)……………………………………½ cup
Pasta (cooked)……………………………………½ cup
Rice (cooked)……………………………………1/3 cup
Quinoa (cooked)…………………………………1/3 cup

Starchy Vegetables
Corn……………………………………………………….½ cup
Corn on the cob, 6 in. long…………………1
Green peas……………………………………….½ cup
Plantain………………………………………………½ cup
Baked potato (medium)………………….1/2
Mashed potato………………………………………½ cup
Winter squash (acorn, butternut)…………½ cup
Yam/sweet potato…………………………………1/3 cup

Crackers and ‘Snack Foods’
Animal crackers…………………………………8
Graham crackers (2.5 in. square)…………3
Matzo…………………………………………………³/₄ oz
Melba toast………………………………………..5
Oyster crackers……………………………………24
Popcorn (popped, 94% fat free)……………3 cups
Pretzels……………………………………………….³/₄ oz
Rye crisp (2 in. x 3 in.)…………………………4
Saltine crackers……………………………………6
Wheat Thins…………………………………………8
Triscuits……………………………………………4

Limit to 3 servings of starch every day!
We don’t expect all of these problems to happen to you but if they do, we want you to know how to solve them. It is helpful to keep a record of anything unusual that occurs and what you did before and after it happened.

Dizziness, Headaches, Lightheadedness, Dark Urine (Signs of Dehydration)

✓ Drink fluids with electrolytes (like Propel Zero or Powerade Zero).
✓ Add salt to your foods.
✓ Drink salty bouillon or soup broth.
✓ Call the Physician’s Assistant phone line at 617-732-8882 if you are unable to catch up on your fluids.

Constipation

Short-term Solutions
✓ Increase your fluids – aim for 64 ounces daily.
✓ Try a laxative, such as Milk of Magnesia or Miralax, and take a stool softener up to 3 times daily.
✓ Try psyllium, a natural soluble fiber.

Long-term Solutions
✓ Increase your fluids – aim for 64 ounces daily.
✓ Increase your fiber intake.
  o Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains if your diet stage permits.
  o If you are unable to add more fiber through your diet, try a fiber supplement, such as Benefiber or Metamucil.
  o Slow and steady is the key to adding fiber to your diet. Start with a small amount, such as one serving of fiber supplement or one extra serving of food with fiber. Stick with that amount for 1-2 weeks before increasing as needed.
✓ Stay physically active.
✓ Continue taking a stool softener as needed.

Diarrhea

✓ Limit or avoid foods with lactose. Lactose intolerance can occur after surgery. Please see page 8 for more details.
✓ Eat slowly and chew thoroughly.
✓ Do not drink fluids with meals.
✓ Avoid high sugar, high fat, and spicy foods.
✓ Limit the amount of sugar-free products (like sugar-free candies). These products may contain sugar alcohols (artificial sweeteners that end with –ol such as maltol, sorbitol, xylitol, etc.) that can cause diarrhea.
✓ Limit caffeinated beverages.
✓ Try a probiotic supplement – ask your dietitian for suggestions.
✓ Try psyllium, a natural soluble fiber.
Possible Problems and Solutions (continued)

Nausea and/or Vomiting
✓ Tune into your eating behaviors. Take small bites, chew thoroughly and pause after each bite.
✓ Stop eating or drinking at the first sign of fullness, which may feel like pressure in your upper chest.
✓ Stay hydrated. Drink at least 48-64 ounces of fluids.
✓ Keep foods tender and moist.
✓ Determine whether you might have lactose intolerance (page 8).
✓ Avoid eating and drinking at the same time.
✓ If these suggestions do not work, or you vomit bright red or dark brown liquid, please call the PA line or your surgeon’s office.

Bloating/Gas/Cramping
✓ Limit or avoid foods with lactose. Lactose intolerance can occur after surgery. Please see page 8 for more details.
✓ Limit or avoid sugar alcohols (artificial sweeteners that end with –ol such as malitol, sorbitol, xylitol, etc.).
✓ Avoid carbonated beverages.
✓ If drinking through a straw causes these problems, avoid using one.

Heartburn
✓ Every person has different food and beverage triggers of heartburn. Make a list of the ones that trigger heartburn for you and avoid them.
✓ Take your prescribed heartburn medication.
✓ Tune into your eating behaviors. Take small bites, chew thoroughly and pause after each bite.
✓ Avoid lying down for 3-4 hours after eating.

Hair Loss
✓ Hair loss after bariatric surgery is called ‘telogen effluvium’ and generally occurs around 3-6 months. This happens because some of your hair follicles are in resting stage (telogen phase) during the time of surgery, and the stress of significant weight loss can cause that hair to stay in the resting stage.
✓ There’s generally not much you can do about hair loss at 3-6 months post-op except minimize washing and brushing to prevent extra fallout.
✓ If hair loss continues after month 6, speak to your dietitian. It could be related to iron, copper, zinc, or B vitamin deficiencies or not eating enough protein.
✓ You can also try Nioxin shampoo.

Dental Health
✓ Because you won’t be eating and drinking together after surgery, you may be at a higher risk for dental carries. Also, acid reflux may damage your teeth, so consider the following:
✓ Swish your mouth out with water/mouth wash (don't swallow!) and spit after eating to remove food particles.
✓ Floss regularly.
✓ Consider brushing 3 times daily.
✓ Talk to your dentist about your bariatric surgery, especially if you have acid reflux.
✓ Consider adding a 3rd cleaning; instead of every 6 months, schedule a cleaning for every 4 months.