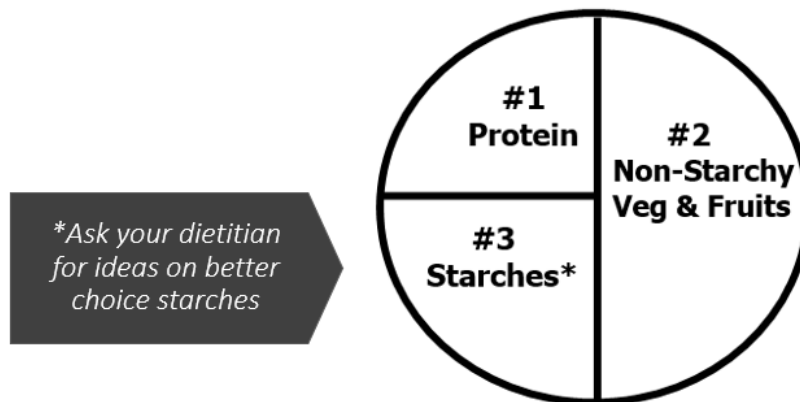


Stage 4: Regular Textures

Tips for Starting Stage 4

- **Start at day 40 post-op. Continue life-long, following the meal plan in your guidelines book.**
- **Follow an eating schedule. Eat every 3-4 hours. Avoid skipping meals.**
 - Also, avoid grazing tendencies. Stick to planned meals and snacks.
- **Your portions may vary each meal or day to day.**
 - Listen to your body and stop eating when satisfied.
 - You may be able to eat more than 1 protein serving at a meal.
 - Portion suggestions are listed in sample meal plans in your guidelines book.
- **At stage 4, no food is off-limits entirely.**
 - Try small amounts to start. It is okay to try foods later if it doesn't work well the first time.
 - Review "Possible Problem Foods" in your guidelines book for foods to be more cautious with.
- **Follow a healthy eating pattern as outlined in the stage 4 meal plan.**
 - Prioritize fluids, protein and then non-starchy vegetables first.
 - As you have room, work in the other food groups, adding in starches last.
 - Visualize the "plate method" to help you plan meals:



Meal Ideas for Stage 4

Use these ideas to get started and explore the recipe websites and cookbooks below for more ideas. Don't be afraid to experiment with new foods, seasonings, and cooking methods!

Eggs

- **Scrambled, Poached, or Hard-boiled** – Avoid overcooking for better tolerance
- **Over Easy or Sunny Side Up** – Pan-fry with cooking spray to limit added fats
- **Crustless Mini Quiches** – Look for 'Bites' recipes at theworldaccordingtoeggface.blogspot.com
- **Eggs in a Mug** – Scramble 1 egg/egg substitute in a microwave safe mug for 1 minute. Add favorite seasonings, breakfast meat, low fat cheese, etc.
- **Omelet or Frittata** – Add your favorite veggies and reduced-fat cheese
- **Simple Breakfast Sandwich** – Egg and reduced-fat cheese on sandwich thin or English muffin



Fish Ideas

- **Teriyaki Salmon** – Try low-sodium teriyaki sauce as marinade or for dipping
- **Lemon Pepper Cod** – Sprinkle with lemon pepper seasoning or DIY with lemon juice and pepper
- **Broiled Haddock** – Use the broiler to keep fish moist on the inside but crisp on the outside
- **Salmon Burger** – Find it frozen at Trader Joe's



Poultry Ideas

- **Roasted Turkey** – Add fat-free gravy for extra moisture and use leftovers throughout the week
- **Turkey Meatloaf or Meatballs** – Substitute ground turkey in your meatloaf or meatballs recipe
- **Chicken Stir-fry** – Cook up extra chicken, cut into strips, and stir-fry with your favorite veggies
- **Crockpot Pulled Chicken** – Let your crockpot do the work to make moist, tender, flavorful chicken
- **Chicken or Turkey Burger** – Grill or pan-fry and top with veggies and/or cheese
- **Chicken Sausage** – Grill or pan-fry; find these in the meat refrigerator section of your grocery store

Vegetarian Meal Ideas

- **Lentils, Chickpeas, or Beans** – Make a stew or chili; toast chickpeas on stovetop and season with garlic and lemon juice as a snack or topping for salads
- **Tofu** – See Stage 3A meal ideas for recipe ideas
- **Soy Crumbles** – Use instead of ground meat for any recipe -breakfast hash, chili, stews (brands include Morningstar Farms and Trader Joe's)
- **Meatless Meatballs** – Use it like a meatball
- **Veggie Burgers** – Buy ready made in the frozen section or make your own; see recipe websites below
- **Seitan (a wheat based vegetarian protein)** - Use instead of meat
- **Tempeh** - Works great in stir fry or crumble in a sauce or stew; look for brands like Lightlife or West Soy

Additional Resources

Explore these websites for healthy recipes using the ideas in this handout:

- www.cookinglight.com
- www.eatingwell.com
- www.emilybites.com
- www.skinnytaste.com
- www.theworldaccordingtoeggface.blogspot.com
- www.yummly.com
- www.mybariatriclife.org

CookingLight

skinnytaste.com
delicious low fat recipes from my family to yours

Cookbooks recommended by other patients:

- **Instant Loss Cookbook**—recipes for Instant Pot or Pressure Cooker.
- **The Skinny Taste Cookbook: Light on Calories, Big on Flavor** – includes desserts and healthier versions of traditional “comfort” food recipes.
- **Hungry Girl Clean & Hungry**—Good for those new to cooking.
- **Fresh Start Bariatric Cookbook**—recipes for all stages of the post-op diet, also includes advice for life after surgery, possible problem foods, eating out, etc.
- **The High Protein Bariatric Cookbook**—simple ingredients, family friendly recipes, and a large section with ideas for smoothies

