



# Let's talk about life after surgery

Learn about life after surgery,  
including diet tips & tricks.



**Sydney Metabolic Surgery**

**Surgery Follow-Up Guide**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following information provides guidelines for you to follow after weight loss surgery and for the rest of your life.

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.



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Please consider visiting our website for more information, or calling the practice to talk about your options with our team.

[sydneymetabolicsurgery.com.au](http://sydneymetabolicsurgery.com.au)

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01 — **Diet guidelines**



## IMPORTANT DIET GUIDELINES

1. Eat three meals per day. Avoid snacking and grazing
2. Eat small amounts
3. Eat protein foods first
4. Do not try to eat food and drink liquid together.  
Consume liquids 30 to 60 minutes before and/or 30 to 60 minutes after eating meals, not during meals
5. Take your multivitamin with minerals
6. Eat slowly!
  - Each meal should last at least 30 minutes
  - All foods must be well-chewed to paste consistency
  - Have one place to eat (such as at the table) and avoid reading or watching TV while you eat. This helps you to enjoy your food, concentrate on eating slower and to realize when your stomach is full
  - Sit while eating
7. Drink calorie-free, non-carbonated, caffeine-free fluids between meals
  - Drink slowly: sip, never gulp
  - Calorie-containing beverages should be limited to skim milk and protein drinks (max 60-70g of protein per day)
  - Limit juice to no more than 4oz. per day (120ml)
  - Consume zero-calorie beverages throughout the day

02 — **Post surgery diet:  
weeks 1-2**



## DAY 1 – 2 AFTER SURGERY

### Clear liquid diet

Clear liquids includes all foods that are liquid at body temperature and can be seen through.

You will be on a clear liquid diet while you're in the hospital.

Examples of clear liquid diet (no added sugar/ sugar-free):

- Clear (diluted) fruit juices without added sugar: Apple, grape, white grape
- Sugar-free Crystal light drink mix
- Herbal tea, caffeine-free tea
- Coconut water
- Clear broth
- Water
- Protein water



Avoid citrus juices (orange/grapefruit) and tomato juice for the first three weeks. Coffee and de-caffeinated coffee contain acids which are irritating to the stomach lining and must also be avoided for the first few weeks.

## DAY 3 THROUGH WEEK 2

### Full liquid diet

You can now add sugar-free, low-fat milk products.

Examples of full liquid diet (no added sugar/sugar-free, low fat):

- Skim milk, lactaid milk, soy milk (non-fat)
- Low fat, thin, strained cream soup (smooth, no pieces of food)
- Protein drinks – start daily when you get home from the hospital. (See section on Protein Supplements, page 17)
- Plain or “light” (no sugar added) yogurt with no fruit pieces
- Clear broth
- VLCD shakes (Optifast, Optislim Platinum)
- Dilute the powder with 250 ml water and have only 100 ml

03 — **Post surgery diet:  
weeks 3-4**



## **WEEK 3 THROUGH WEEK 4**

### **Pureed diet**

The pureed diet includes all items listed in the clear and full liquid diets, and all items that are in pureed consistency.

Bariatric pureed diet foods include:

- Mashed vegetables
- Cottage cheese
- Scrambled egg (light and fluffy)
- Pureed meats (puree  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup broth with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped meat)
- Pureed vegetables (puree  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup vegetable with water or broth)
- Pureed fruits (puree  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fruit with 2 to 4 tablespoons of water)

Tips for a correct pureed diet:

- Make sure foods are well blended
- Start slowly. If you do not tolerate pureed foods go back to the liquid diet and try again in a few days
- Continue protein drinks or protein supplements every day (60g protein per day)

### **Tips to get started**

- You will need a blender or food processor, or you can purchase baby food
- Everything that you eat on the pureed diet should be sugar-free or without any added sugar, low fat, and blended to the consistency of baby food or smooth applesauce
- Start with 1 ounce (2 tablespoon) portions – no more than 4 tablespoons at the most. Listen to your body and stop eating as soon as you feel full
- Eat protein foods first. Then if you are too full, try vegetables or fruits
- Remember to drink liquids between meals, not with meals

Remember:

**if the food needs chewing, don't eat it!**

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## Post surgery diet: week 5



## **WEEK 5 AFTER SURGERY**

### **Soft solid food diet**

If you have been tolerating pureed foods, begin the soft solid foods diet.

This includes all items listed for clear liquids, full liquids, and pureed diets, plus all foods listed for the soft diet.

Try one or two new foods a day. This will help you understand what foods you tolerate.

- Remember your stomach pouch empties more slowly with more solid or dense foods than with liquids, so you will be able to tolerate a smaller quantity of food than you could with liquids
- Go slowly. If you do not tolerate soft foods, go back to pureed foods – wait a week and try again
- Space meals 4-5 hours apart
- Eat protein foods first
- Avoid foods high in sugar and fat
- Continue your protein drinks between meals (don't exceed 60-70g of protein per day)
- Drink other fluids constantly between meals

### **Examples**

Anything in the soft solid food diet should have no added sugar or be sugar-free, and low fat. Here are a few examples:

- Baked fish (no bones)
- Imitation crab meat, baby shrimp
- Bananas or avocados
- Well-cooked vegetables without seeds or skin (no corn or peas and only small amounts of potatoes)
- Scrambled, poached or hard boiled eggs
- Tuna or egg salad (no onions, celery, pimientos, etc.)
- Finely shaved deli meat
- Lamb meat (minced twice) or very soft vegetables and chicken

## **Common “problem foods”**

Avoid these foods at least until six to eight weeks after surgery.

- Red meat such as steak, roast beef, pork. Red meat is high in muscle fibre, which is difficult to digest even with a great deal of chewing
- Un-toasted bread; rolls, biscuits (toasted bread may be better tolerated)
- Pasta
- Rice
- Membrane of citrus fruits
- Dried fruits, nuts, popcorn, coconut
- Salads, fresh fruits (except bananas) and fresh uncooked vegetables, potato skins

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## — **Post surgery diet: week 6-8**



## WEEK 6-8 AFTER SURGERY

### Regular diet

You can now try eating the “problem foods” listed in the previous section.

- Go slowly. Try a small amount to see how you feel
- 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
- Make sure you stick to small portions (3-5 tablespoons per meal)
- Sit while eating and remember to chew well and enjoy slowly your little healthy meal

### Foods to avoid:

- Corn, potato, or tortilla chips, hard taco shells – they are hard to break down
- Nuts and seeds – they are hard to break down (try smooth sugar-free nut spread instead)
- Fried foods and greasy foods – hard to digest and high in calories
- Avoid high sugar and high fat foods to avoid a high calorie intake

### Points to remember:

- Solid foods will fill your stomach pouch more than liquids so you will be eating smaller quantities of solid foods compared to liquid foods
- If you don't tolerate a food the first time, wait a week and try again
- You may find that you tolerate a certain food one day and not the next. It is normal for this to happen
- If you don't tolerate certain foods or notice nausea, vomiting or diarrhea during or after eating, ask yourself the following questions to improve your habits:
  - Did I chew to a paste consistency?
  - Did I eat too fast?
  - Did I eat too much?
  - Did I drink fluids during 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?

## Proteins

Proteins are the most important nutrient to concentrate on when resuming your diet. Because the volume of your meals will be limited, you should aim to consume around 60-70g of proteins per day. This needs to come from your diet and the supplements you will be taking.

### Why are proteins important?

- Wound healing
- Sparing loss of muscle
- Minimizing hair loss
- Preventing protein malnutrition

Remember to eat protein foods first at each meal, followed by vegetables and fruit.

See the overview below of good sources of protein:

Protein Sources	Serving Size	Protein(g)
Skim or 1% milk	1 cup (8 ounces)	8
Evaporated skim milk (canned)	1 cup	19
Soy milk beverage	1 cup	7
Non-fat dry milk powder	1/3 cup powder	8
Non-fat, sugar free yogurt	1 cup	8
Non-fat or low fat cheese slices string cheese	1 ounce/1 slice	6
Lean meats – skinless chicken or turkey breast, fish, beef, ham, deli meats	1 ounce	7
Egg or egg substitute	1 egg or ¼ cup subst.	7
Peanut butter (creamy)	1 tablespoon	5
Tofu	¼ cup	5
Legumes: dried beans, peas, or lentils chilli, bean soup	½ cup, cooked ½ cup	7-9 6-7
Soy/vegetable patty (like Gardenburger)	1 patty	8-10
Hummus	½ cup	6

### Measuring hints:

- 1 ounce of meat is equal to about 3-4 tablespoons of chopped or ground meat
- 1 ounce of grated or cottage cheese, tuna or egg salad is ~ ¼<sup>th</sup> cup (or 4 tablespoons)
- A 3 ounce portion size of chicken or meat is about the size of a deck or cards



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## **Vitamins & supplements**



## **PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS**

Because of the limited volume capacity of your stomach after bariatric surgery, it will be nearly impossible to meet your protein needs from food sources up to a year after surgery.

You will need to consume a protein drinks to get a total of 60-80 grams protein per day.

Once you will be off the liquid diet, it is best to consume your protein drinks between meals, rather than as a meal.

### **How to choose the right protein supplements:**

- Whey protein is preferable, especially whey protein isolate (remember that whey protein is rich in lactose)
- Review the label to find a product that is high in protein, low in carbohydrate or sugar and low in fat
- Choose a product with at least 20 grams of proteins per serving
- Choose a product that is low fat: no more than 3 grams of fat per 100 calories. For example, Atkins shakes tend to be too high in fat and are not recommended
- Choose a product that is low-sugar or sugar-free and sweetened with sugar-substitutes such as NutraSweet (aspartame), Splenda (sucralose) or Acesulfame K. The sugar content listed on the label should be no more than 6 grams per serving
- Avoid drinks such as Ensure, Boost, or SlimFast. They tend to have a lot of carbohydrate and fat compared to pure protein powder mixed with skim milk or water
- Another great source of protein is collagen (animal source). It has no lactose and is available in tasteless versions that can be added to drinks, soups, and other dishes
- If you are vegan, look for vegan, plant-based protein powders (usually from peas or soy plants)

## **DAILY VITAMINS AND MINERALS**

You are required to take vitamin and mineral supplements everyday for the rest of your life, as it is vital to maintaining your nutritional health and preventing vitamin and mineral deficiencies. You are now at greater risk for decreased absorption of vitamins and mineral because you are eating a significantly smaller amount of food in a day.

- All pills must be crushed, chewed or liquid for the first month after surgery or as directed by our practice

### **Multivitamin with minerals:**

- First 2 weeks: no supplements required
- From week 2 after surgery: you can start fizzy supplements like Berocca Multi, 1 daily
- From week 4: Start bariatric chewable multivitamins

You will discuss the best choices of multivitamins with our bariatric physician Dr. Rawof in your consultations after surgery.

07 — **Tips**



## KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

### Diet

- For a safe weight loss, you need to eat a healthy, well balanced diet
- Be sure to obtain the most nutrition per serving
- Choose low-calories, nutrient-dense foods
- Be patient. At first, you will fill up after just a few bites, this is normal
- Stop eating when you feel full
- Initial meal size should be approximately 30-60 ml. (2 -4 Tbsp) per meal, 3 meals per day. Volume tolerance will increase after healing (usually about 60-120 ml). Continue to eat slowly, chew foods thoroughly and drink in-between meals
- When you try a new food, take one bite to see if it is comfortable for you
- Following the diet recommendations will help you maintain your weight loss

### Supplements

- You must take the recommended multivitamin/mineral supplement every day for the rest of your life
- You should consume protein drinks or supplement with protein powder until your protein intake from foods is adequate

### Exercise & habits

- Exercise regularly and follow our suggestions when exercising
- Aim to walk 12,000-14,000 steps per day
- Your dedication to diet, exercise and lifestyle changes will dictate your success after surgery
- 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 and exercise diary to your follow-up appointments)
- Grazing, drinking fluid with meals, or consuming high calorie foods or liquids are examples of habits that might negatively affect the surgery outcomes
- Attend bariatric support group meetings on a regular basis before and after surgery

**Continue to follow the guidelines provided throughout this guide. They are crucial for you to achieve and maintain a healthy weight loss.**

## TIPS TO CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOUR

1. Don't eat in front of the TV
2. Don't eat while reading
3. Pre-portion your food and put the food's box or package away
4. Keep tempting food out of the house
5. Don't go to the grocery store hungry
6. Make a shopping list and stick to it
7. Use smaller plates and bowls
8. Keep healthy foods available
9. Focus on activities other than eating when going out
10. Brush your teeth after meals or if you feel the desire to eat
11. Don't eat standing up at parties or buffets
12. Don't stand at the food table at parties
13. Offer to bring a healthy food item to a party
14. Park your car far away from your destination
15. Take the stairs instead of the elevator
16. Get up to change the TV channel instead of using the remote control
17. Keep a food and exercise diary
18. Aim to walk 12,000-14,000 steps per day
19. Get an active watch to keep track of your daily exercises



**Sydney  
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# Get in touch.

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