Weight Loss Surgery
Specializing in laparoscopic bariatric surgery

Lifelong Eating Guide

At your 1-month appointment, your dietitian will give you a handout with a list of the easiest meals and snacks to digest to help you with the transition from puree to regular texture food. You will likely not tolerate all foods right away. Eating after surgery is a process. It can take up to 3-8 months to be eating all foods again and to be able to comfortably consume 1 cup of food at a meal. Be patient.

My eating plan:

- ✓ **Eat 3 meals + 2-3 snacks every day.** Structure is very important.
- ✓ **Avoid grazing or snacking on food every 15 minutes**.
- ✓ Average portions sizes are **1-1½ cups of food for meals** and **½-1 cup of food for snacks**.
- ✓ Check in on your portion sizes regularly to make sure they're not increasing without you realizing it.
- ✓ You likely no longer need protein supplements to meet your protein goal if you're eating ¾ cup of food at a time. Check with your dietitian if you're unsure.

My hydration plan:

- ✓ **Drink 1.5-2.0 L (6-8 cups) of water and low-calorie beverages** every day to stay hydrated and to prevent constipation. Bring a water bottle with you everywhere you go.
- ✓ Slowly start weaning off zero/low calorie sports/electrolyte drinks, and water enhancers with zero calories (ex. Crystal Light or Mio) to plain water, if possible.
- ✓ **Limit regular coffee to maximum 2-3 cups per day** (or <400 mg caffeine per day). There is no limit for decaffeinated coffee. Be intentional about the sugar and cream you are adding to your coffees.
- ✓ **Avoid carbonated beverages** (Ex. soda, carbonated water, beer, etc.). The gas and bubbles in these drinks will likely upset your stomach and they can trigger cravings for junk food and takeout.
- ✓ **Avoid alcohol** for the first 6 months after surgery to reduce your risk of developing stomach ulcers. If you choose to drink after 6 months, do so in low moderation. You likely have a new tolerance to alcohol. For some patients, even just one standard drink is enough to raise their blood alcohol concentration higher than the legal driving limit. Do not drive after drinking, regardless of the amount.

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Breakfast Ideas:

- ✓ 1 slice of toast or 4-6 high fibre crackers with 1-1.5 oz (30-50 g) of cheese or 2 tbsp of peanut butter
- ✓ 1 slice of toast with 1-2 eggs
- ✓ 125 mL (½ cup) of cottage cheese with fruit
- ✓ 125 mL (½ cup) of Greek yogurt with fruit and 2 tbsp of high fibre cereal
- ✓ ¾ cup oatmeal or overnight oats made with high protein milk + berries

Lunch & Supper Ideas:

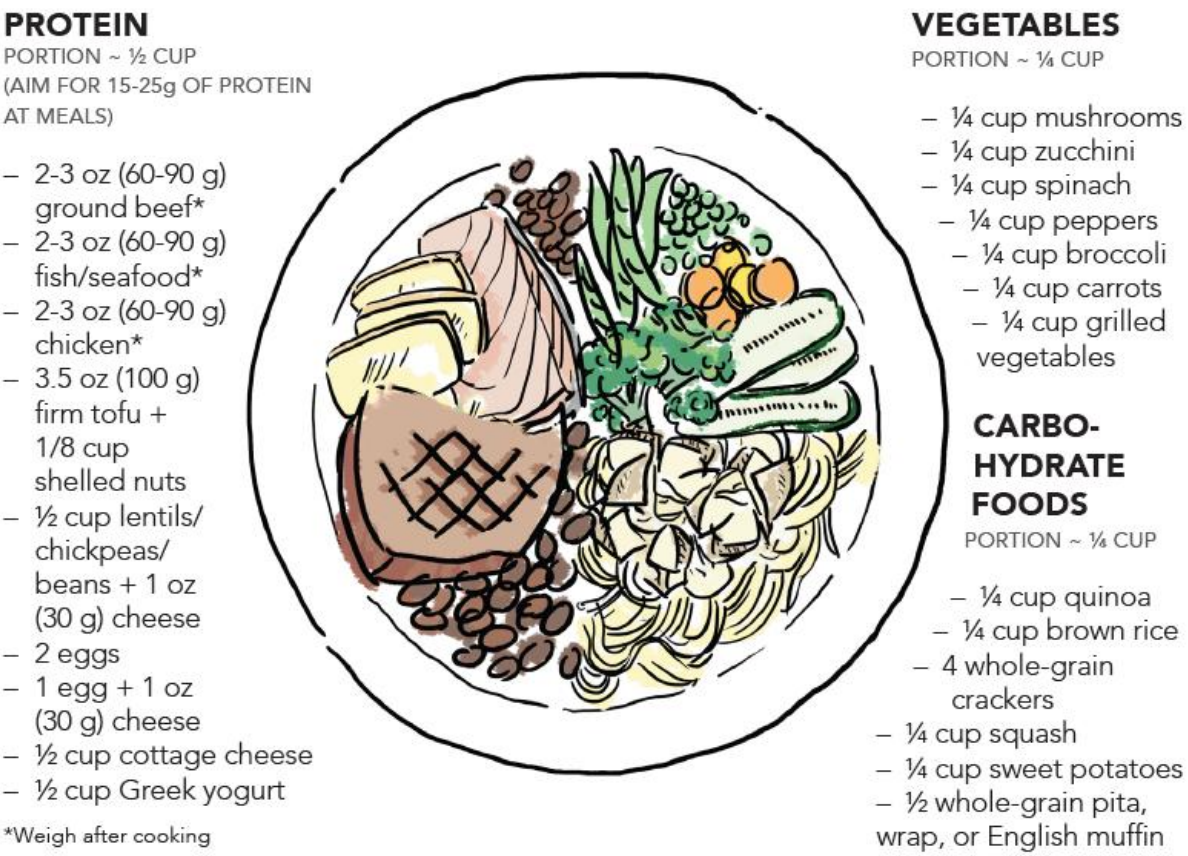

Image from: www.bariatricsurgerynutrition.com

Snack Ideas:

A balanced snack includes a protein rich food plus a fruit, vegetable or grain product.

- ✓ 1-2 eggs + ½-1 banana
- ✓ 1-1.5 oz (30-50 g) cheese + 4-6 high fibre crackers or a homemade muffin
- ✓ ¼-½ cup cottage cheese + berries
- ✓ 1 cup cow's milk or soy milk
- ✓ 2 tbsp peanut butter + apple slices
- ✓ 1/3 cup (100 g) Greek yogurt + high fibre cereal
- ✓ ¼ cup shelled nuts or seeds + dried fruit

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Reminders & Tips

- **Remember to always eat slowly and to chew your food well**. Stop when you feel satisfied, not when you feel uncomfortably full.
- **Include a source of protein with every meal and snack.** Foods that are high in protein help you feel fuller longer. They also help you maintain your muscle while you are losing weight.
- **Remember to not drink and eat at the same.** Stop drinking 15 minutes before your meals and snacks and start drinking again 30 minutes after you have finished eating. Set a timer to remind you. This helps you feel fuller longer and prevents weight re-gain.
- **Take your vitamins every day for life.** It is now recommended to switch to a pill multivitamin (rather than a chewable one). Plan blood tests with either your family doctor or with a doctor privately at 6 months and 12 months after surgery, and then annually for the rest of your life.
- **It is important to eat a variety of foods from all of the food groups.** Eating foods from each of the four food groups is important to eat enough calories, protein, fibre, and vitamins to stay healthy.
    - ✓ For **dairy products**, choose 0-2% milk, 0-2% yogurt and cheese that has <25% M.F.
    - ✓ For **meat & alternatives**, choose lean cuts of meat and remove skin and extra fat. Tender and moist meats and fish are easier to digest.
    - ✓ For **grain products**, choose whole grain products and breads with ≥3 g of fibre per slice. Doughy breads can be difficult to swallow, so be sure to always toast your breads. Try rice and pasta slowly, many patients complain that these foods are difficult to tolerate.
    - ✓ If you are having difficulty tolerating **fruits and vegetables**, remove their skins and seeds and/or try cooking them. In the first couple of months after surgery, the fibre found in many vegetables and fruits is hard to digest.

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Life-long eating example menu:

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Breakfast	2 eggs + 1 whole grain toast + 2 strawberries	½ cup 2% cottage cheese + banana slices	¾ cup plain oatmeal made with milk + berries + maple syrup
Snack	1/3 cup (100 g) Greek yogurt + 1/3 cup high fibre cereal	¼ cup peanuts + 1 apple	Soy latté with 1 cup soy milk
Lunch	Small tuna wrap with lettuce + cherry tomato and cucumber salad	2 oz chicken + 1 oz feta + 1/3 cup of quinoa + served over salad with dressing	Quiche with ham + apple slices
Snack	Protein bar with 8-20 grams of protein	1.5 oz cheddar cheese + a homemade muffin	1/3 cup tzatziki made with Greek yogurt + baby carrots
Supper	3 oz salmon + ¼ cup rice + ½ cup broccoli	½ cup firm tofu in sauce + ½ cup noodles + ¼ cup vegetables	3 oz ground beef in a sauce + 1/3 cup sweet potato + ¼ cup cherry tomatoes
Snack	No snack needed.	1 toast + 1 tbsp peanut butter	2 cookies
Beverages:	6 cups of water 1 cup of coffee with milk	6 cups of water 1 cup of coffee with milk	6 cups of water 1 soy latté

Contact your dietitian when you have questions or concerns.

Email your dietitian if you would like a list of high protein foods and their protein content.

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