



Before Bariatric Surgery: Things to Think About

Bariatric surgery is only a “tool” to help you get started with a healthier life. The key is to start new, healthier eating habits and routine activity before bariatric surgery so they become a part of your lifestyle.

How does bariatric surgery work?

- Bariatric surgery creates a much smaller stomach or sleeve. It may be as small as an egg. It may only be able to hold 2 to 4 ounces at a time.
- This very small pouch or sleeve is a built-in way to limit your food intake.
- The reduced food intake will lead to rapid weight loss during the first few weeks and months following surgery.
- Avoid stretching the pouch by constant overeating. Medical problems and complications can also occur by overeating.
- Frequent snacking on high calorie foods and liquids can defeat weight loss efforts as well.

What are the diet stages?

- To start you will only have sips of water. Then you will move to a liquid diet. Next, you will eat a pureed or blenderized diet. A soft diet might also be recommended before you can eat regular foods.
- Most people may start eating regular foods within a few weeks to a few months after the surgery. Talk with your doctor or dietitian about your diet.
- If you experience a large amount of vomiting after trying a new texture, go back to what you were eating before. Wait a few days then try the new food and texture again. You may have to introduce regular solid or soft foods one at a time. Don't rush moving forward.

What are some foods people should limit or avoid after surgery?

- Very high fat foods such as fried foods
- High fat snack foods
- High sugar foods such as juices, soda pop, candy, cakes, cookies and pastries
- Carbonated beverages
- Milkshakes or other high calorie, high fat health shakes
- Alcohol



Do all people reach their goal weight?



- Some patients hit a weight plateau and stop losing weight or start re-gaining weight after surgery. This can occur at any stage after surgery and may be different for every patient.
- Healthy eating habits and routine exercise can prevent it. After you recover from your surgery, you will need to continue healthy habits. The surgery itself is just a “tool”. Healthy habits should become your lifestyle.

Keep in mind....

- Most facilities require participation in a weight loss program, such as *MOVE!*, before having bariatric surgery.
- You will have to follow a strict vitamin and mineral supplement regimen after surgery in order to get enough nutrition.
- You will have regularly scheduled follow ups with your medical team and your dietitian following surgery. Keeping these follow up appointments will be important for your health and success after bariatric surgery.
- Participation in *MOVE!* or other support groups after surgery is also advised to improve success after surgery.

