

POST-OPERATIVE DIET GUIDELINES

General Recommendations

After surgery, it is critical to follow dietary instructions carefully to allow proper healing and avoid complications.

- Do **not introduce solid foods** until instructed
- Eat **very slowly** and chew thoroughly (20–30 times)
- Take **small bites** and stop immediately when feeling full
- Do **not drink with meals**
 - Stop liquids **15 minutes before meals**
 - Resume **30–45 minutes after meals**
- Avoid **carbonated drinks and alcohol for at least 6 weeks**
- Avoid **straws and chewing gum** (reduces air intake)
- Introduce new foods **one at a time** to monitor tolerance
- Stay well hydrated: **64–80 oz (1.5–2.5 L) per day**
- Prioritize **protein intake at all times**

⚠ Overeating can cause vomiting and stretching of your stomach.

PHASE I – CLEAR LIQUIDS

Day 1–7

Purpose: Hydration + initial healing

Rules:

- Sip slowly throughout the day
- Start with **1–2 oz at a time**, increase gradually
- Goal: **40–60 g protein/day (via clear protein drinks)**
- No sugar, no caffeine, no carbonation

Allowed:

- Clear protein drinks (preferred)
- Broth (chicken, beef, vegetable – fat free)
- Sugar-free gelatin (Jell-O)
- Sugar-free popsicles
- Electrolyte drinks (low sugar)
- Water, flavored water
- Decaffeinated tea

✗ Avoid:

- Juice with sugar
- Regular Gatorade
- Added sugar (important correction)

PHASE II – FULL LIQUIDS

Day 8–14

Purpose: Increase protein and nutritional intake

Rules:

- Protein goal: **60–80 g/day**
- Continue sipping slowly
- Avoid sugar and high-fat foods

Allowed:

- Protein shakes
- Skim or low-fat milk (or lactose-free)
- Low-fat yogurt (preferably Greek, sugar-free)
- Blended soups (no chunks)
- Cream soups (no corn/potato base)
- All Phase I liquids

PHASE III – PUREED / SOFT DIET

Day 15–21

Purpose: Transition to soft texture foods

Rules:

- Texture: **applesauce consistency**
- Eat slowly and in very small portions

Allowed:

- Eggs (scrambled, soft)
- Cottage cheese (low fat)
- Greek yogurt
- Pureed chicken, turkey, or fish
- Beans, lentils
- Soft cooked vegetables
- Soft fruits (banana, applesauce)

✗ Avoid:

- Dry meats
- Bread, rice, pasta
- Raw vegetables

PHASE IV – SOFT → REGULAR DIET

Week 4 onward

Purpose: Long-term eating pattern

Rules:

- Transition slowly to regular foods
- Always prioritize **protein first**
- Continue chewing thoroughly

Food Guidelines

Protein (Priority)

- Chicken, turkey, fish
- Eggs
- Greek yogurt
- Lean meats
- Protein supplements

Vegetables

- Start with soft, well-cooked
- Gradually introduce raw

Fruits

- Soft fruits first
- Avoid juices

Starches (LIMITED)

- Avoid early post-op
- Introduce slowly after tolerance

Fats

- Small amounts only
- Avoid fried/greasy foods

IMPORTANT NUTRITION PRINCIPLES

- Protein should be the **primary nutrient**
- Typical distribution:
 - Protein: **50–60%**
 - Carbohydrates: **20–30%**
 - Fat: **10–20%**

HYDRATION

- 64–80 oz per day
- Sip continuously
- Avoid dehydration (very common complication)

⚠ **FOODS TO AVOID**

- Sugary foods (candy, desserts, juices)
- Carbonated beverages
- Fried foods
- Processed snacks
- Alcohol (minimum 6 weeks)

⚠ **EATING BEHAVIOR (CRITICAL)**

- Eat **3 meals + 1–2 small snacks max**
- Avoid grazing **✗**
- Meals should last **20–30 minutes**
- Stop at first sign of fullness

Here is a chart of suggested foods to keep in mind when making a meal plan that fits your new bariatric lifestyle. This does not constitute a weight loss plan or program, but can be a good guideline for preparing meals:

	PROTEIN	Dairy	VEGETABLES	FRUIT	BREAD AND STARCHES	SNACKS	DRINKS
KEEP IN MIND:	<i>The best way to prepare meats is to bake, broil, or grill. Always prioritize protein first at every meal</i>	Prefer low fat or fat free ones.	More vegetable servings can satisfy your appetite, but remember protein first.	<i>The fresher the fruit, the better!</i>	Whole grains will sustain you better and longer. Choose high fiber cereals/breads. Make sure you chew to applesauce consistency!	Snacks should be no greater than 150 calories, 5 grams of sugar, or 5 grams of fat. Snacks high in fiber are the best.	Aim for 64–80 oz (1.5–2.5 L) daily to stay hydrated. Sips slowly, do not gulp.
AVOID:	Dark meats, duck, skin, breaded/fried foods, bacon, sausage, meats high in fats.	Regular Cheese, Milk 2% or greater, limit egg yolk	Starchy Vegetables, preparing them in cheese or creams.	Fruit juices, coconut,	Refined carbohydrates and high-calorie starches (fried foods, pastries, white breads, processed foods)	High-sugar and processed snacks (desserts, chips, candy, baked goods)	Avoid high sugar drinks, having more than 6oz. caffeine a day, alcohol, and carbonated drinks.
SOME SUGGESTIONS	Chicken, turkey, fish	Fat free or 1% milk	Broccoli	Berries	Pasta		Water (most suggested!!)
	Lean lamb, venison	Low fat yogurt	Beans	Melons	Rice	Small fruit	Sugar-free flavored beverages
	Fat free lunch meat	Soy Milk	Celery, avoiding the strings	Bananas	Peas, legumes, sweet potatoes	Low fat yogurt	Electrolyte drinks (low or no sugar)
	Canadian Bacon	Fat free cottage cheese	Tomatoes	Oranges	Cereal	Granola bars (watch the calories)	Unsweet iced tea
	Soy or bean Burgers	Plain greek yogurt	Brussels sprouts	Apples	Pita	Sugar free/fat free ice cream or fudge bars	Decaffeinated tea
	Bean Soups	Reduce fat cheeses	Cauliflower	Grapes	Tortilla	Low fat cheese w/ almonds/peanuts	Decaffeinated coffee
	Tofu		Mushroom, spinach	Dried fruit			