

DIET RULES FOR WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY

First 4-6 weeks

- 1. Eat food only if you are hungry. If you are not hungry, don't eat.**
The goal is to re-learn eating patterns (for best lifelong success) using the stomach pouch and actual hunger as the guide. Learn to avoid “mind hunger” such as: eating from boredom or appealing commercials on TV, eating because your Mom said you should, or because some dietician told you that you need a certain amount of protein each day. The human body is evolved to handle starvation just fine, so if you eat nothing for one or more days (as long as you stay hydrated) you will be fine. Furthermore, your freshly operated stomach is rather sensitive, and intake of food puts it under stress. The little stomach will heal the quickest if it is given the least possible work (=food) to handle. In other words, *the less you eat the better you will probably feel.*
- 2. Drink plenty of zero-calorie liquids.** We hesitate to set a numerical goal for liquid intake per day, though the range of 48 – 100 ounces is reasonable. The real key to watch is the amount of urine that you make, and the color of that urine. (If your kidneys are happy that you have enough fluid, then we are happy.) The goal then is to pee a medium to large volume of urine at least 2-3 times per day, and to have that urine be very light in color, almost like water.
- 3. If you are hungry, choose mushy proteins. Avoid carbohydrates.**
Aim for the smallest “meal” possible to relieve your hunger. In the beginning meals are best thought of as experiments, so don't plan a certain amount that you are going to eat. Instead, try a teensy-weensy spoonful and see how it feels, then go from there.
- 4. Don't drink liquids with your food. Avoid drinking for at least 1 hour after eating.** Liquids taken with food or shortly after food are very likely to overfill the pouch and cause vomiting in the first few weeks. Some call this the “cork effect.” The same guideline remains important in the long term because liquid will wash the food through the pouch and eliminate the desired feeling of satiety.
- 5. Start your exercise program ASAP.** Simple walking is a good way to start. The key is to exercise almost every day, and to have the mental attitude or goal of doing just a bit more each day. Push yourself until you sweat and you're breathing hard. Within months you will amaze yourself with the exercise you can accomplish.
- 6. Begin taking Vitamins + Iron, and supplemental Calcium.** You should begin with chewable vitamins and calcium because they tend to be the best tolerated. Later (when you can eat chicken comfortably) you are welcome to change to any form or brand that you like. The key requirements are to take a Multivitamin + Iron twice per day, and to take at least 1500 mg of supplemental Calcium each day.