

Bariatric Surgery Center: Discharge Instructions After Weight Loss Surgery

*** Most instructions are similar for Gastric Bypass and Lap-Band patients.
The differences will be explained in this handout.**

DIET INSTRUCTIONS:

- Consume only liquids for the first 14 days for gastric bypass patients or for the first 21 days for Lap-Band patients.
- Drink a minimum of 48 ounces of liquids daily (6 to 8 ounces per hour).
- Drink liquids 30-60 minutes before or after meals. **Never with the meal.** This will prevent nausea or vomiting.
- Liquids should not have more than 20 grams of sugar per serving.
- You can only drink sugar-free, decaffeinated and non carbonated beverages (Crystal Light, unsweetened decaffeinated tea or coffee, skim milk or non-dairy milk if tolerated). You may use artificial sweeteners as desired.
- It is important that you consume around 500 calories per day and 30-50 grams of protein per day during the first two weeks following your operation.
- You may need to take protein supplements to meet the caloric and protein requirements. You can use Boost High Protein, Ensure High Protein or Carnation Instant Breakfast for the Carb Conscious. Also, available at GNC, Whey Protein Powder is high in protein. If the supplement you choose is more than 20 grams of sugar per serving, you can dilute it in half with skim milk or water.
- We recommend that you continue to take protein supplements until 6-9 months after surgery.
- Advance your diet as instructed by your surgeon.

DIET PROGRESSION:

Gastric Bypass

Clear Liquids (Day 1-2)
Full Liquids (Week 1-2)
Pureed Foods (Week 3-5)
Soft Foods (Week 6-12)
Regular Foods (week 13)

Lap-Band

Clear Liquids (Day 1-2)
Full Liquids (Week 1-3)
Pureed Foods (Week 4-6)
Soft Foods (Week 7-12)
Regular Foods (Week 13)

MEDICATIONS:

- All medications should be taken in a chewable, liquid, or crushed form for the first 2 weeks.
- Resume any medications you were taking before your surgery, unless advised otherwise by your surgeon.
- If you had gastric bypass surgery, you will need to take the following medications daily in addition to the ones you were taking before your operation:

Chewable Multivitamin 1 Opti-Source 4 times per day **OR**
2 Flintstones Complete **OR**
2 Centrum Adult Chewable Vitamin

*Tums Ultra (for Calcium) 1 chewable tablet 3 times per day
you need 1500 mg per day.

*Ferrous Sulfate (Iron pills) 1 325mg tablet daily

*Pepcid Chewable 20 mg twice a day **OR**

*Nexium 40 mg once a day

Actigall 300mg twice a day for 6 months for
patients who still have their gallbladder
B12 (sublingual) 500 micrograms daily

*If you take Opti-Source, it provides adequate amounts of calcium and B12 so you may not need to supplement them. You do need 1 chewable calcium daily (500 mg).

- **For patients who had Lap-Band, You Do not need to take Iron, Calcium or B12 supplements. You should take a multivitamin once a day forever and Actigall 300mg twice a day for 6 months**
- If needed, pain medication will be prescribed. You are to follow the directions on the label.
- If you experience nausea after gastric bypass surgery, you may get a prescription for Compazine. Follow the directions on the label.
- If you experience constipation, you may get a prescription for Colace. Follow the directions on the label.
- If you are diabetic, you should monitor your blood sugar 3 times a day and follow up with your family doctor within 7-10 days after surgery so appropriate changes can be made with your medications if needed.
- Avoid Motrin, Advil, Aspirin or other medications belonging to the NSAID class. They tend to irritate your new stomach pouch.
- **For patients who had Lap-Band, you need to take nausea medication on a regular basis for the first 3 weeks. It is absolutely important to avoid nausea and retching for at least the first three weeks after surgery.**

INCISION/DRAIN CARE:

- Follow up in the office for staple removal as directed by your surgeon.
- Leave the Steri-Strips on until they fall off, usually 7-14 days. Pat dry after showering.
- If you have a JP Drain, empty and record the amount 2-3 times a day. Bring this record with you to your office visit. The decision to remove the drain is based on the amount and color of output.
- If you experience drainage from your incision, apply a clean dressing and contact the office. This can occur after surgery.
- If you have a gastrostomy tube placed in your stomach during surgery, you should flush the tube with 30cc of water 3 to 4 times a day. This will prevent the tube from clogging. You can also put your medications and protein powder through the G-tube. But you should flush it after every use.
- You can shower but no baths for the first four weeks; until all open wounds have closed.

ACTIVITY:

- No driving until cleared by your surgeon.
- Do not do anything that requires concentration when you are taking narcotic pain medications.
- Do not lift anything heavier than 15 lbs for 4 weeks after surgery; or more than 50 lbs 4-6 weeks after surgery. After 6 weeks, there is no weight restriction.
- Do not vacuum for 3 weeks.
- Walk at least 5 minutes four times a day, gradually increasing the time you are walking. You are permitted to climb stairs as tolerated.

PREGNANCY:

- It is very important to remember that it is not advisable to get pregnant for at least **18 months** after weight loss surgery. Because birth control pills, patches and injections are not absorbed well after this surgery, young women need to use barrier contraceptive method (condoms) for that duration. If you get pregnant earlier, you need to see a high risk obstetrician as soon as possible.

CALL YOUR SURGEON FOR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Temperature over 101° F.
- Persistent nausea or vomiting, or inability to tolerate fluids.
- Pain that doesn't go away even with medication.
- Redness, swelling or drainage at or near your incision.
- If your drain or G-tube gets pulled out accidentally.
- **If you experience tenderness in the calf of your leg(s), chest pain or shortness of breath, GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT MASSAGE YOUR CALF TO EASE THE PAIN.**

FOLLOW-UP:

- Return to the surgery office in one week; call (814) 877-6997 or (800) 248-0227 to schedule your appointment.
- **In case of an emergency, call the office at (814) 877-6997. After office hours, call the Hamot Operator at (814) 877-6000 and have the on-call bariatric surgeon paged.**
- Please continue to attend support group meetings; You should attend at least 4 to 6 meetings after surgery. They are held the first, second and third Wednesdays of each month at the Hamot Heart Institute. They start at 6:30pm and last until approx. 8:00pm. The first Wednesday meetings focus on the preoperative period and up to 6 months after surgery. The third Wednesday meetings focus on individuals 6 months or more after surgery. The meeting on the second Wednesday focuses on Lap-Band.

MEMORIZE AND LIVE BY THESE 4 RULES:

- 1) Three (3) months after surgery, eat only 3 meals each day! Limit your snacking to 1-2 snacks/day.
- 2) Maintain adequate fluid intake by drinking 48- 64oz. of fluids per day.
- 3) Incorporate 30 minutes of physical activity EVERY DAY!
- 4) Maintain adequate protein, vitamin and mineral supplementation.

EATING BEHAVIOR TIPS:

- When you start taking solid foods, chew your food thoroughly.
- Try to consume foods with high protein content (cottage cheese, fish, beans, egg whites, skim milk, and low-fat yogurt).
- You will NEVER be able to eat the same amounts of food that you used to. Your stomach will be the size of an egg, so you should not overeat! You will feel full after eating a small quantity of food, therefore, **ALWAYS eat your protein food first**. You will only be able to eat small amounts of food and liquids.
- Avoid red meat for approx. 6 months after gastric bypass surgery because it will not digest properly. Avoid fried meats and eggs, highly seasoned or spicy meats, and the skin of meats.
- Your dietary goal should be:
 - *Protein: 60-100 grams per day
 - *Carbohydrates: About 100 grams per day
 - *Fats: About 30 grams per day