

Diet After Bariatric Surgery

3 Main Goals After Surgery

1. **Stay hydrated.** Aim for 6-8 cups (48-64 fl oz) of water per day. This can include your protein shakes early on. Drink slowly and sip fluids all day long. Set reminders to help you remember to drink. There is no need to separate water from protein shakes.
2. **Try to get at least 60 grams of protein a day.** Your goal is to drink 3 protein shakes a day. Start with 1 shake and work your way up. Use flavoring tips to improve the taste. You will need protein shakes for the first year after surgery. Try different types of shakes to help improve tolerance.
3. **Drink at least 3 protein shakes per day** (breakfast, lunch and dinner) for the first 4-6 weeks after your surgery. This will allow time for your new stomach to heal. As your food intake increases, shake requirements decrease. Work with your dietitian to figure out when to advance your diet.

Drinking Tips

- Sip, sip, sip. Take small sips and avoid gulping.
- Use a timer to remind yourself to drink.
- Have a loved one remind you to drink.
- Avoid straws.
- Drink slowly and sip fluids all day long. Carry a water bottle, drink, or protein shake with you wherever you go.
- Drink 2-3 protein shakes per day. Call the clinic if you have problems drinking the shakes.

- **No** sugar-sweetened drinks.
- **No** soda or fizzy drinks.
- **No** juice or other liquid calories besides your protein shakes.
- **No** caffeine or alcohol.

Approved Drinks

- Water, flavored water (such as Propel), spa water or fruit-infused water
- Sugar-free juice or juices with less than 5 calories per serving (such as diet juices)
- Crystal Light, sugar-free Kool-Aid, water enhancers such as Mio drops
- Powerade ZERO, Gatorade Zero, Fruit-2O
- Diet V-8 Splash, diet Snapple (caffeine-free)
- Beef, chicken, or vegetable broth
- Vegetable juice or V8 juice
- Protein shakes, mixed with water or milk
- Milk, soymilk, almond milk
- Sugar-free popsicles
- Sugar-free gelatin
- Herbal tea

Vitamins and Mineral Supplements

Take your vitamins **every** day, including weekends and while on vacation.

B complex is the most important early on. Make sure it contains at least 15 mg of Thiamine (Vitamin B-1). **Do not crush** the B-Complex because it will make your food or drink taste bad. If needed, simply cut it in half. Taking B complex with a protein shake can help.

Next add chewable multivitamins. Take 1 in the morning and 1 in the evening. Be sure it

is a “complete” (meaning contains minerals).

Add the sublingual B-12 (500-1,000 mcg/day). Do not swallow. This needs to dissolve under your tongue.

Add Vitamin D3 (4,000 international units). This pill should be small enough to take normally. Keep taking your Vitamin D2 as prescribed.

Lastly, add the calcium citrate with Vitamin D. Take 1200-1500 mg a day. You will need to take this 2-3 times per day. Chewable forms of calcium are available online (check with program dietitian). You can also crush calcium tablets and add to your shakes.

If you are having trouble with the pill form, there are chewable tablets you can purchase at specialty stores or online. Work with your dietitian to find what works best for you.

Crush or cut pills that are larger than a pencil eraser.

Take a stool softener as needed (no need to poke open the gel cap).

Slowly add Benefiber® to your protein shakes to add fiber. This will help prevent constipation. Be sure you are drinking the recommended amount of fluid.

Getting Enough Liquids and Protein

Be sure that you drink enough liquids and get enough protein in each day. **You will need to drink all day long to get everything in.** It is likely that you won't feel hungry. You may feel like you are forcing yourself to drink. This is normal. It is common to feel overwhelmed at first. Try to frame food and shakes as medicine.

Do your best and do not expect to be perfect. It takes time to work out a schedule that is right for you. Remember that it gets easier in time. A structured plan can help keep your fluid intake on track. You may want to use a timer to help you remember to eat and drink until you get used to it. Call the clinic if you are having trouble.

Sample Schedule

Use the sample schedule below to help plan your new eating routine. The times listed are examples. Make a schedule that works for you.

Drink choices are examples. You may choose other drinks from the list. The amounts of liquids listed are also examples. Drink only what you can handle at a time. Work on sipping shakes throughout the day. Drink your protein shakes at times that work best for you.

Time

6:30-7:00

4 oz of water or protein shake with medicine B-complex, chewable multivitamin, vitamin D, B12, stool softener

7:30-10:00

Start drinking protein shake (mix with 8-16 ounces of water or milk) and sip throughout the morning

10:00-11:00

4 oz of water

11:30-12:30

Chicken, beef, or vegetable broth (8 oz.), if desired

12:30-3:30

Protein shake (mix with 8-16 oz. milk or water)

Add Benefiber® to shake if needed
Calcium chew

3:30-4:30

8 oz of water or flavored water

4:30-5:30

8 oz milk or water

5:30-7:00

Protein shake (mix with 8-16 oz. milk or water)

Calcium chew

7:00-8:00

4 oz of water

7:30-8:30

Sugar-free popsicle or herbal tea

9:00-9:30

4 oz of water

Chewable multivitamin

Calcium chew

Who to Call

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions, contact UW Health using the phone number listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition.

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: **(608) 890-5500**.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright 2/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#327