

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO HOSPITALS
NUTRITION SERVICES

**BACK TO THE BASICS:
NUTRITION AFTER SURGERY**

**WHY DO I LOSE WEIGHT
AFTER SURGERY?**

- ◆ Decreased Portions
- ◆ Healthy Choices/Protein
- ◆ No Concentrated Sugars
- ◆ No Carbonated Beverages
- ◆ Eating Slowly
- ◆ Exercise

**HOW DO I MAINTAIN MY
WEIGHT LOSS?**

- ◆ Decreased Portions
- ◆ Healthy Choices/Protein
- ◆ No Concentrated Sugars
- ◆ No Carbonated Beverages
- ◆ Eating Slowly
- ◆ Exercise

The first year after gastric restrictive surgery is a critical time for patients to make life-long behavior and lifestyle changes. At first, a decrease in appetite and inability to consume large amounts of food helps patients in making the first steps towards successful weight loss. It is extremely important during this first stage to be compliant with the restrictions of the diet in an effort to be able to have ongoing continued success.

Throughout the first year following surgery, many physical and psychological changes will be occurring. This is a time of adjustment and change. Working at making lifestyle changes in the beginning is the key. As time goes on, increased appetite and ability to consume more food will likely occur. During this time, it is important to "go back to the basics" and continue making healthy choices in all aspects of your life.

Studies regarding long-term success after gastric restrictive surgery have shown that patients need to use the surgery as a tool to change old habits and behaviors for the greatest amount of success. Patients who have been most successful continue to strive at:

- ◆ consuming well-balanced, healthy meals
- ◆ choose healthy fluids
- ◆ taking vitamin regimen as prescribed
- ◆ allowing adequate rest
- ◆ exercise, exercise, exercise
- ◆ maintaining personal responsibility

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HEALTHY CHOICES

- ◆ Consume three well-balanced meals daily. Make sure each meal has adequate protein to meet your daily needs. Maintain adequate portions. Eat slowly to avoid overeating.
- ◆ Choose healthy snacks. Stay away from junk food and trigger foods such as chips, ice cream and candies.
- ◆ Choose foods high in fiber. Fruits and vegetables should be included in meals or as snacks. When consuming breads, choose wheat or rye. Complex carbohydrates will keep your stomach full for longer.
- ◆ Avoid simple carbohydrates/simple sugars. Chips, pastries, candies and other high sugar foods do not give good nutrition and only add extra unwanted calories.
- ◆ Choose fat-free foods (including: sour cream, cream cheese, salad dressings). Avoid frying - bake, broil or grill. Choose butter substitutes such as "I Can't Believe It's Not Butter Spray". This will also save on those extra hidden calories.
- ◆ Avoid grazing, set specific meal times just as you did following surgery.
- ◆ Prepare foods in advance if you are always on the run! Avoid fast food.

FLUIDS

- ◆ Drink fluids in between meals.
- ◆ Choose water, crystal light, unsweetened iced tea, milk or flavored water.
- ◆ Stay away from carbonated beverages, no matter what stage after surgery you are at. The carbonation releases gases that stretch the stomach pouch.
- ◆ Limit juice to no more than 8 oz/day and dilute with water. Juice is filled with sugar and is giving no good nutrition.

VITAMIN REGIMEN

- ◆ After surgery, vitamin and mineral supplementation is necessary to prevent possible long-term deficiencies such as anemia and osteoporosis. It is extremely important to continue taking the prescribed regimen daily. If deficiencies are noted from your lab work, additional supplementation will be necessary. This can be more time consuming and much more expensive.

ADEQUATE REST

- ◆ Take care of you. Allow yourself to have adequate rest. Try to get a good night sleep. Look for healthy and calming ways to reduce stress.

EXERCISE

- ◆ Output - Input = Weight Loss; Output = Input = Weight Maintenance
- ◆ Being active will help you maintain your weight loss as well as helping you feel more energetic and overall healthier. Exercise is the key!

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

- ◆ Surgery is a tool, take responsibility for the choices you make in your life. When you have a bad day, make up for it with a good day. Look for reasons to make good choices and not excuses to make bad ones. We are all going to have bad days, it's ok. Don't punish yourself, acknowledge that it happens and move on to the positive.