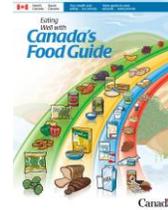


**Nutrition: Preparing for Weight Loss Surgery**

- *Lifestyle changes that will help you prepare for your new life after surgery*

**1. Eat 3 meals per day.**

Refer to *Canada's Food Guide* to help plan healthy meals. Balance each meal with foods from at least 3 food groups. Eat within the first 60 minutes of waking up and aim to eat meals about 3-4 hours apart.



**2. Pair protein-rich foods with carbohydrate-rich foods for healthy snacks.**



*Sugars* and *starches* are carbohydrates that are the body's main source of fuel. They tend to be digested quickly and often don't fully satisfy the appetite. Protein foods are digested more slowly and stay in the stomach longer to better satisfy appetite.

**3. Choose high-fat foods less often.**

High-fat foods carry more calories and can lead to weight gain. Popular high-fat foods include deep-fried foods, fast foods, and snack foods like baked goods, chips, and chocolate.



**4. Choose high-sugar foods less often.**



Sugar provides the extra calories that make weight loss almost impossible. Beware of foods that are packed full of sugar like candy, chocolate, donuts, fruit drinks (Fruitopia®, Kool-Aid®, lemonade) ice cream, milkshakes, pastries, regular pop, sweetened coffee drinks.

Liquid calories won't fill you up, but will provide extra calories that add extra pounds. Learn to drink water and other calorie-free beverages more often.

**5. Accept smaller servings.**

Practise portion control. Imagine your plate divided into 4 sections: one quarter ( 1/4 ) of the plate is for **protein** (*Meat and Alternatives*), one quarter ( 1/4 ) of the plate is for **starch** (*Grains* or potato), and the remaining half ( 1/2 ) of the plate should be **vegetables** and fruit.



Portion Control Plate can be ordered from *Steps Count*.



### **6. Avoid all sources of carbonation, for a lifetime.**

Carbonated beverages may leave you feeling bloated and uncomfortable after surgery and provide unwanted calories that can interfere with your chances of weight loss.

Kick your cravings now by emptying your house of all carbonated beverages like beer, champagne, coolers, pop, and sparkling water.

### **7. Avoid alcohol for 3 months before surgery and 6 months after surgery.**

Alcohol provides extra calories that interfere with successful weight loss. Regular intake may harm your health and increase your risks during surgery. After surgery, beware of the irritating effects alcohol has on the “pouch” and your lower tolerance.



### **8. Avoid sources of caffeine 1 – 2 months before surgery and 6 months after surgery.**



Too much caffeine may cause anxiety, irritability, nervousness, rapid heartbeat, sleeplessness, and upset stomach. Once you have a tolerance to caffeine, you may experience fatigue, drowsiness, and headache when you avoid it. Slowly wean off of caffeine now to avoid problems after surgery.

#### **More New Habits to Practise:**

- Eat slowly.
  - a) Cut food into small pieces.
  - b) Take smaller bites; put less food on each forkful.
  - c) Put utensils down in between bites.
- Chew food thoroughly.
  - a) Chew each bite until it feels like applesauce-consistency.
- Sit down at the table and focus on what you are eating.
  - a) Pay attention to flavour and texture, and appreciate the food you are able to eat.
- Sip the fluids you drink.
- Plan ahead and prepare your own meals at home.
  - a) Restaurant eating should be no more than once per week.
- Learn to enjoy vegetables and fruit.
  - a) They are naturally lower in calories and are packed full of health-promoting substances.
- Keep a food journal. Learn more about your eating habits by writing things down.