



York and Scarborough  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Thinking About Bariatric (Weight Loss) Surgery?

## Diet for Gastric Bypass & Sleeve Gastrectomy

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

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# Introduction

This diet sheet will provide more information about the diet for the Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass (RYGB), One-Anastomosis Gastric Bypass (OAGB) and Sleeve Gastrectomy operations.

## How does bariatric surgery work?

Both the RYGB and OAGB work by restriction and malabsorption. Sleeve gastrectomy works by restriction only.

**Restriction:** this means the size of your stomach is reduced and so you are only able to eat small portions.

**Malabsorption:** this means that part of the small intestine is bypassed and so fewer calories from food are absorbed.

Your new stomach will be much smaller and your eating habits will need to change. Your stomach will be about the size of an egg cup after the gastric bypass, a small banana after a gastric sleeve and two thirds of the length of a small banana after an OAGB.

Surgery alone will not achieve weight loss. You must be willing to commit to lifelong changes to your eating habits and lifestyle.

## **Will I need to follow a diet before my surgery?**

You will need to follow a very low calorie (kcal) diet for two weeks before your surgery which will involve eating less than 1000kcal daily. The diet options we provide are low in fat and carbohydrates and provide moderate amounts of protein. The aim of this diet is to reduce the size of your liver, making the surgery easier and has shown to reduce the risk of complications.

## **What diet will I need to follow after my surgery?**

You will need to follow a pureed or blended diet for about four to six weeks after your surgery.

After this if there are no problems you can gradually introduce more solid foods into your diet.

## **How much will I be able to eat after surgery?**

To start with you may only manage two to three tablespoons at meals. This will slowly increase up to a tea plate/side plate size portion at meals. This is a lifelong change, and you will never be able to eat large portions at meals again. Long term you should try and stick to three small meals a day and avoid snacking.

## **Will there be any foods I need to avoid after my surgery?**

You should try to eat a variety of foods to make sure your diet is balanced. This is very important when your meals are only small.

There may be some foods that you can't tolerate. It is difficult to say what foods will not agree with you as everyone is different. However, many people find that they are unable to tolerate red or tough meat, fibrous fruits and vegetables (such as green beans, celery, skins on fruit), bread and overcooked pasta and rice.

Many people also have taste changes after surgery.

## **How will I know when I am full?**

After your surgery the feeling of fullness is very different. It is usually felt as a tightness or feeling of discomfort in the lower chest area and not in your "stomach area" at all. You should carefully watch out for this and learn to recognise when you feel full and then stop eating. Eating slowly will help you learn to recognise when you are full.

## **What will happen if I eat too much?**

If you eat too much this can cause pain, discomfort, nausea or vomiting. You will soon learn how much you can eat at a meal.

## **How long will it take to eat a meal?**

You should eat slowly and take 20 to 30 minutes for each meal. If you eat too quickly you can easily eat too much. You need to chew all food well. If you forget, the solid food will feel like a “lump of lead” in your stomach and may cause nausea and vomiting.

## **Will the surgery affect how I can drink?**

You will need to drink in between meals and avoid drinking up to thirty minutes before and thirty minutes after eating. There is not enough room in your new stomach for food and drinks at the same time. You must sip at drinks slowly and avoid fizzy drinks. You will not be able to drink a full cup in one go so have lots of small or half cups instead.

## **Can I still drink alcohol?**

You should try and avoid drinking alcohol until you have fully recovered from your surgery. After your recovery, you may include small amounts of alcohol in your diet. However, alcohol is high in calories and therefore it can slow down weight loss.

## **Can I still have a treat such as chocolate or ice cream after surgery?**

After the gastric bypass operation high calorie, sweet/high sugar foods and drinks such as ice cream, chocolate or large amounts of pure fruit juice may cause unpleasant symptoms known as dumping syndrome. These symptoms include feeling faint, sweaty, dizzy and sick and having diarrhoea.

All patients who have had weight loss surgery should try and follow a healthy diet and avoid high calorie sugary and fatty foods as they can slow down weight loss or even cause weight gain.

## **Will I still be able to go out for meals?**

Going out for a meal will be very different. You will only be able to eat small amounts and so will not be able to have a large or three course meal or have anything to drink (including alcohol) with your meal.

## **Will I need to take any extra vitamin or mineral supplements?**

You will need to take vitamin and mineral supplements for the rest of your life. It is very important that you take these as advised by your dietitian, nurse or surgeon.

## **Are there any side effects from the operation?**

Side effects include feeling sick, vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort. These are more likely to happen if you do not follow the advice on your diet. You may also have problems with excess wind and a noisy stomach.

Your bowel habit is likely to change after the operation.

Some people also suffer from hair loss after surgery, but this is not usually permanent.

# How much weight will I lose?

The amount of weight loss varies and is very individual. It depends on your starting weight, the diet you follow and the amount of exercise you take.

After the Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass operation on average people lose between 65 to 68% (around two thirds) of their excess weight in the first two years after surgery.

After an OAGB operation on average people lose between 60 to 75% of their excess weight in the first two years after surgery.

After the sleeve gastrectomy operation on average people lose between 50 to 60% (around half) of their excess weight in the first two years after surgery.

Ask your dietitian if you would like any more information about the amount of weight you could lose.

## **Is the weight loss permanent?**

The rate of weight loss eventually slows down and your weight will become more stable. Some patients over time put weight back on, so it is important to keep to a healthy balanced diet and follow the advice given to you by your dietitian to help stop this from happening.

Exercise and physical activity will also help you to continue to lose weight.

If your surgery goes ahead you will have more appointments with the dietitian to provide you with further information about your diet.

## **Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about my diet before or after my surgery?**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your Dietitian.

Name:

Telephone: 01904 725269.

## **Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:  
Admin Team, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York,  
YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725269 or  
email [yhs-tr.yorkdietitians@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.yorkdietitians@nhs.net).

## **Teaching, training and research**

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

# Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:  
[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/)

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