



York and Scarborough  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Introducing Solid Foods after Bariatric Surgery

(Gastric Bypass and Sleeve Gastrectomy)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

**Department of Nutrition and Dietetics**

Scarborough Hospital  
Telephone: 01723 342415  
Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QL

York Hospital  
Telephone: 01904 725269  
Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE

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This diet sheet has information on introducing more solid foods after your Bariatric surgery (Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass (RYGB), One-Anastomosis Gastric Bypass (OAGB) or Sleeve Gastrectomy).

## **When can I start to introduce more solid foods into my diet?**

After following the puree diet for four to six weeks you are now ready to start introducing more solid foods.

When introducing any new food always swallow each mouthful carefully before taking the next one. If the more solid food does not agree with you, continue with puree foods for a few more days.

While introducing new foods you should still continue to follow the advice below:

- Continue to take your vitamins and minerals each day.
- Take fluids in between meals only and sip slowly.
- Drink plenty of fluid.
- Avoid fizzy drinks.
- Do not eat foods high in sugar or fat (e.g. sweets or chocolate).
- Continue to have six protein portions, as well as two vegetable servings, two fruit servings and two starch (carbohydrate) servings.

# What order should I begin to introduce more solid foods?

Listed below are three stages. Start at stage one and work your way through the list. As you move through each stage, you may find that you are able to manage slightly bigger portions. The aim is to move from six small portions (two to three tablespoons) per day to three side-plate sized portions per day.

Try each new food on its own, so if you do not tolerate something you will know what it is. Progress onto stage two once all the foods in stage one have been tried at least three to four times.

<b>Stage One Foods</b>		
<b>Protein</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Amount for one serving</b>
Minced meats	Chicken, turkey, beef, lamb, pork with sauce or gravy	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
Fish	Haddock, cod, salmon in a sauce or boil in bag Mashable with a fork Tinned fish in brine, water or tomato sauce	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
Quorn / soya mince	With sauce or gravy	2 oz / 56 g (about 2 to 3 tablespoons)

Baked beans		1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
Eggs	Soft cooked, scrambled or poached	one egg
Cottage Cheese		2 oz / 56 g (about 2 to 3 tablespoons)
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>		
Soft fruit	Avoid skin on fruit. Mashed banana, ripe melon/mango	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
Tinned Fruit	In juice not syrup, drained	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
Stewed Fruit	Apple, pear	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
<b>Starch</b>		
Crackers	Crackerbread, crispbreads, breadstick, melba toast	two
Milky Pudding	Rice pudding/sago/tapioca pudding/rice snack pots	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
Soup	Tinned or homemade	150-200 mL
Tinned spaghetti	Spaghetti, hoops, spaghetti with sausages (tinned)	one small tin (200 g)

If these foods cause no vomiting, heartburn or indigestion move on to stage two foods.

<b>Stage Two Foods</b>		
<b>Protein</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Amount for one serving</b>
Casserole, stew, curry (mild)	Beef, lamb or chicken stew Avoid dumplings	2 oz / 56 g (about 2 to 3 tablespoons)
Wafer thin meats	Ham, chicken, turkey	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
Quorn chicken style pieces	With sauce or gravy	2 oz / 56 g (about 2 to 3 tablespoons)
Tinned meat	Tinned mince	two slices
Omelette	Can add cheese, wafer thin meat	one egg
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>		
Vegetables	Cooked softly	1 oz / 30 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
<b>Starch</b>		
Breakfast cereals	Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Special K etc <b>Avoid</b> Muesli, Shredded wheat, granola	1 oz–2 oz / 28–56 g (about 2 to 4 tablespoons)
Pasta and Noodles	Lasagne, pasta with a tomato based sauce	1 oz / 28 g dry weight

If these foods cause no vomiting, heartburn or indigestion move on to stage three foods.

<b>Stage Three Foods</b>		
<b>Protein</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Amount for one serving</b>
Tender meat	Chicken (drumstick or thighs are better tolerated than breast), turkey, beef, pork, lamb. Avoid skin. Choose lean meats and poultry.	1 oz / 28 g (about 1 to 2 tablespoons)
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>		
Raw fruit	Apple, pear, peaches, nectarine (peeled)	a small piece of fruit
Raw vegetables	Avoid skins initially	to tolerance
Salad	Lettuce, tomatoes etc	to tolerance
<b>Starch</b>		
Toast	Wholemeal toast is better tolerated than white toast	one slice
Cooked rice	Avoid overcooked rice	1 to 2 tablespoons
Bread	Wraps, pitta, Danish bread or sandwich thins are better tolerated	one slice

## **How long should I spend on each stage?**

There is no time limit for each stage. It is important to move through each stage in your own time. However, it is recommended that you try each food at least three to four times.

Once you have reached the end of stage three you can increase your variety of foods and try other foods that are not listed.

## **Are there some foods I may never tolerate?**

Some foods are difficult to tolerate, particularly:

- Soft doughy bread
- Tough or dry meats e.g. steak, roasted or barbecued meat
- Overcooked rice or pasta
- Skins on fruit or pith on oranges and grapefruits
- Nuts or dried fruit
- Stringy or fibrous vegetables e.g. celery, green beans

These may take longer to tolerate, and you may never be able to eat very much of them.

## **If I have not tolerated a food well, does this mean I will not ever be able to tolerate it?**

You will find your own tolerance level of food. There may be some foods you cannot eat to start with. Keep trying as you may eventually be able to eat them.

Occasionally a food is tolerated on one day but is not tolerated the next day. This is normal. Keep trying and you should be able to eat most foods after three to four months. Remember to include a variety of foods in your diet.

## **How many meals per day should I be aiming for?**

When you are able to eat solid foods, you should be aiming to follow a healthy eating pattern. If you are able to eat a side-plate portion, aim for three meals per day. If your portion sizes are smaller, then aim for four to six meals per day.

Each meal should contain a protein food, a starchy (carbohydrate) food and a portion of vegetables or fruit to ensure your diet is balanced and to avoid nutritional deficiencies.

Avoid developing a 'grazing' pattern (eating small snacks throughout the day) as this can prevent weight loss.

## **Do I still need to avoid foods high in sugar and fat?**

Yes. The following foods may cause 'dumping syndrome' and will make it more difficult for you to reach your target weight.

- Foods high in sugar e.g. sweets, cakes, biscuits and chocolates.
- Foods high in fat e.g. fried foods, pastry and snack foods like crisps and peanuts.
- High calorie drinks e.g. milkshakes, normal squashes and full sugar fizzy drinks.

## **Do I still need to eat slowly?**

Eating slowly helps you to recognise when you are full, prevent you from overeating. Eating too quickly can cause pain and vomiting. Aim to spend 20 minutes on each side-plate size meal. Some people find it helpful to follow the '20-20-20 rule':

- Chew each mouthful 20 times
- Wait 20 seconds between mouthfuls
- Aim for 20 minutes on each meal

## **How much fluid should I be drinking?**

You should be aiming for eight to 10 cups (about 2 to 3 litres or 4 to 6 pints) per day to prevent dehydration and constipation.

Avoid drinks that are high in calories e.g. sugary drinks, milkshakes. Instead choose water, no added sugar/diet drinks.

Avoid adding sugar to hot drinks or choose a sweetener instead. Fizzy drinks should be avoided as they can cause discomfort.

## **Should I still separate my foods and fluids?**

You still need to take fluids between meals, rather than with meals. Allow 30 minutes before a meal and 30minutes after a meal free from fluids.

# Should I continue to take my supplements?

You should continue to take your calcium and/or iron supplements as prescribed. However, instead of a chewable multivitamin it is recommended that you switch to Forceval, once daily or purchase an “over the counter” complete multivitamin and mineral supplement recommended by your dietitian, for example:

- Lloyds Pharmacy A–Z multivitamin and mineral  
Take two tablets each day.
- Sanatogen A–Z Complete  
Take two tablets each day.
- Centrum Advance Adults  
Take two tablets each day.
- Baricol Complete chewable tablets  
Take three tablets each day.
- Baricol Complete effervescent tablets  
Take two tablets each day.
- Baricol Complete powder  
Take two sachets each day.

## Can I start to have alcohol?

It is recommended that you limit your intake of alcohol. Alcoholic drinks are high in calories, which can prevent weight loss.

Both men and women are advised to avoid exceeding 14 units of alcohol per week, to keep associated health risks to a low level. If you do drink as much as 14 units per week, it is best to spread this evenly over three days or more, with at least two free alcohol days.

If you wish to cut down the amount you are drinking, a good way to help achieve this is to have several alcohol free days each week.

## How many units do drinks contain?

- Small glass of wine (125 mL, 12%) = 1.5 units
- Medium glass of wine (175 mL, 12%) = 2 units
- Large glass of wine (250 mL, 12%) = 3 units
- Pint of lower-strength lager, beer or cider (3.6%) = 2 units
- Pint of higher-strength lager, beer or cider (5.2%) = 3 units
- Can of lager, beer or cider (440 mL, 5%) = 2 units
- Single measure of spirits (25 mL, 40%) = 1 unit

Please note: drinks with higher % alcohol will contain more units of alcohol.

# Healthy eating following weight loss surgery

You need to eat a healthy balanced diet in order to lose weight, stay healthy and prevent any nutritional deficiencies.

**Protein foods** – these include meat, fish, eggs, Quorn, soya and beans. Aim for one to three 56 – 84g (2 – 3 oz) portions of these foods per day and try and include protein at each meal. Total amount of protein per day should be between 60 – 80 g.

**Dairy foods** – aim for two to three portions per day. They may also count as a protein food. Examples include:

- Milk (skimmed or semi-skimmed) 200 mL (about one third of a pint)
- Hard cheese (28 g / 1 oz)
- Soft cheese – cheese spread, low fat cream cheese and cottage cheese (28 – 60 g / 1 – 2 oz)
- Yoghurt and fromage frais – diet or low fat varieties (one pot)

**Fruit and vegetables** – aim for two to three portions per day and increase as tolerated. One portion is about 80 g or about 3 oz.

**Starchy foods (carbohydrates)** – bread, potatoes, rice, pasta and cereals. Aim for two to three portions per day (28 – 84 g per portion) and choose brown/wholemeal versions where possible.

**Fats and sugary foods** – use a small amount of olive oil or spray oil for cooking and replace puddings with low fat low sugar yoghurt. Avoid the high sugar / high calorie foods such as chocolate, sweets, or ice cream which can cause dumping syndrome.

# Example of a menu when back to normal food

## Breakfast

Small bowl of cereal (about 30 g)  
with 190 mL or one third of a  
pint semi-skimmed milk

## Serving

one carbohydrate  
  
one protein

## Lunch

One slice bread with low fat spread  
or two crispbreads

one carbohydrate

One slice cooked meat /  
Scrambled egg

one protein

Small salad

one vegetable

## Evening meal

56 g / 2 oz meat and vegetables  
in a casserole

two protein  
one vegetable

Two new potatoes

one carbohydrate

190 mL or 200 mL  
(about one third of a pint)  
semi-skimmed milk  
for drinks during the day

one protein

## Snacks

Frequent snacking can reduce the rate of weight loss. However, if you need a snack in between meals try and choose healthy snacks such as fruit, one to two crispbreads/crackers with low fat soft cheese, yogurt or fromage frais, a glass of low fat milk.

## **Why is my hair thinner than before my surgery?**

Some people experience hair loss after surgery. This can be due to the stress of surgery on your body, and rapid weight loss. You can reduce the risk of hair loss by:

- Having a balanced diet
- Ensuring you include a protein rich food with each meal. If you are considering a protein shake, you can talk to your dietitian about which ones are suitable.
- Make sure you continue to take your A-Z multivitamin and mineral daily.

## **Why have I stopped losing weight? or Why am I gaining weight?**

Below are a few of the most common reasons why you might be gaining weight, ask yourself:

- Have my portion sizes become larger than recommended.
- Have I started snacking between meals e.g. crisps and biscuits.
- Have I started drinking with meals.
- Have I started having meals which are not balanced.
- Am I having more frequent meals which are lasting longer than 20 minutes.
- Am I having lots of meals containing too much liquid.
- Am I having too much alcohol.
- Am I drinking fizzy drinks.

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, Nutrition and Dietetic Department, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725269, or email [yhs-tr.yorkdietitians@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.yorkdietitians@nhs.net)

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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.

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[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/)

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