

Intragastric Balloon

What is an Intragastric Balloon?



The intragastric balloon is a temporary tool to help you lose weight. It is a soft silicone balloon that is placed into the stomach and filled with sterile water. This fills part of the stomach and will help you to lose weight by making you feel satisfied more quickly therefore reducing the amount of food that you eat.

The balloon is inserted endoscopically (through the mouth and throat) under sedation. The balloon is only able to remain in your stomach for 6-12 months, depending on which balloon you have chosen to have. After this time, it would be unsafe as your gastric acid may start to erode through the silicone material of the balloon. It is therefore vital that you make dietary changes during this period to optimise weight loss and improve your health.

To remove the balloon, it is deflated and then withdrawn in endoscopy under sedation.

Success with an Intra gastric Balloon

A date to remove your balloon will be set at the time of placement and you must attend on this date. Studies have shown that over the 6 months that the balloon is in place, people can lose between 25 and 44% of their excess weight. A good target is to aim to lose around 1kg per week while the balloon is in place. Some people may find that they lose more weight during the first 3-6 months of placement and then the balloon helps them in maintaining this weight loss. The amount you lose and whether you maintain this loss will depend on the lifestyle changes you make and how well you maintain these changes. Failing to attend follow up appointments will increase your risk of complications and will also make it less likely that you will get the best results possible.

Risks and potential side effects

As with any procedure, there are potential risks and side effects related to the intra gastric balloon. The following are uncommon however you need to be aware of them:

Risks:

- Intestinal obstruction by the balloon. If the balloon deflates spontaneously it may pass into the small bowel causing a blockage. This can potentially cause death. If you experience any of the following symptoms it may be a sign that this has happened:
 - A sudden loss of satisfaction from food
 - An increase in hunger/appetite
 - Being able to tolerate larger portions of food
 - A sudden change of feeling in your stomach
 - Persistent vomiting
 - Severe abdominal pain
 - Severe constipation associated with pain
 - Unable to tolerate food or fluids

If this happens you must follow the instructions in the ‘What to do in an emergency’ section of this booklet. The balloon will need to be removed immediately.

- Bleeding or perforation of the digestive tract can occur as a result of injury during the balloon insertion or removal, this may require surgical correction.

Side effects:

- Gastric discomfort, nausea and vomiting are very common to begin with but rarely continue in the long term unless the balloon is causing a blockage.
- A feeling of heaviness in the abdomen, abdominal pain, back pain, reflux and indigestion have also been reported.
- Burping is common; if this becomes problematic please contact your Dietitian.
- Bad breath can occur where food is left on the balloon and starts to digest. Ensure you take a drink 45mins after your meal to wash food remains from the balloon.
- Medication is prescribed to reduce your stomach acid production and reduce symptoms of nausea and cramping. It is important that you take this as prescribed.

Prior to the procedure

You must not eat anything for 12 hours before the procedure. You may have plain water up to 6 hours before. Eating and drinking after these times can increase the risk of food and fluids going into your lungs during the procedure. Your procedure will be cancelled if your stomach is not empty.

If you have been informed that this is going to be performed as day surgery you will need to bring someone with you to accompany you home and you must have someone with you for the first 24hrs. Because you will be sedated you will not be able to drive or take public transport on your own when you leave.

What to expect whilst in hospital

Admission

Please don't bring any valuables or large sums of money with you and remove all jewellery (including body piercings) apart from your wedding ring. Please also remove any false nails or nail varnish before your admission. Do not wear any make up on the day of your admission, mascara must be removed.

Pain relief

Most patients find that the procedure is not painful, but you may have a sore throat or some abdominal discomfort.

If you experience any pain it is important that you tell the nurse or doctor who is looking after you.

- **Mobilising**

Getting up and about after your procedure is essential to reduce your risk of developing a blood clot. We will ask you to get up from the bed as soon as you have recovered from your sedation. We will ask you to sit out of bed and have a small walk. When you go home, try to go for a small walk every four hours during the day. Please do not try to walk on your own if you feel dizzy or lightheaded.

- **Medication**

If you are a diabetic and take medications to control your diabetes please speak to the team about adjustments to the dose of your medication after your procedure.

Please note: If you are a type 1 diabetic do not stop taking your insulin. Although the amount of insulin you need may be lower as you lose weight, you will still always need to take insulin.

After your procedure it is very likely that you will experience some nausea and/or vomiting. To help with this we can give you medications:

- Ondansetron (an anti-sickness medication)
- Buscopan (an anti-spasmodic to reduce cramping/pain)
- PPI e.g. Omeprazole (to reduce stomach acid production)

These medications should help with symptoms but do let your nurse or doctor know if you are still feeling nauseous after taking them. For a number of people this nausea can continue after you are discharged home but we can advise you on which medications to keep taking until this improves.

Most people can take solid tablets after this procedure, however larger tablets may need to be halved or crushed. You may need to space out your medications throughout the day and you shouldn't try to swallow more than one tablet at once.

- **Fluids**

Once you are awake from your sedation you will be able to take sips of clear fluids. You will be able to gradually build up to drink any fluids with the exception of alcohol or fizzy drinks. More information about this can be found in the dietary section of this booklet.

Once you are drinking enough fluids we will take down your drip. You will need to be tolerating fluids before you can be discharged home. Initially you may need to sip the fluids as big mouthfuls or lots of fluid drunk quickly may make you feel more sick or bloated and/or uncomfortable.

Going home following the insertion of an Intra-gastric Balloon

This information should help to answer some of your questions and to help you know what to expect once you leave the hospital.

- **Pain and pain relief**

You may experience some abdominal pain or discomfort for a few weeks after your procedure. This should ease and improve with time but if your pain becomes worse or does not improve, please speak to your bariatric team or your GP.

- **Bowel function**

As a result of this procedure, a change in your diet and the use of any pain medication you may experience irregular bowel habits. This should settle in time but may be different from your bowel habit before your gastric balloon was placed.

If you are experiencing any of the following please discuss them with your consultant or dietitian:

- Loose and/or smelly stools which continues for a few days
- You notice some blood in your stools
- You are struggling to open your bowels

Following this procedure, it is important to avoid taking any bulk forming laxatives such as fybogel, as these may swell in your stomach and cause discomfort. Recommended laxatives include lactulose, senna, sodium docusate or Movicol®.

- **Exercise and activity**

Most people will feel tired when they first go home from hospital and are frustrated by not feeling able to do all the things they want to do. Do not worry, this is normal and will improve, remember to continue moving around as you were in hospital. Gentle walking will help speed up your recovery. You should not engage in any moderate to vigorous physical activity for the first 24hrs. Any changes in position e.g. lying to sitting must be slow and steady until your body gets used to the balloon.

- **Work**

The time at which you return to work depends on the type of job you have. You can expect to return to work around one week after your procedure depending on your recovery and how active your job may be.

- **Driving**

We recommend that you should not drive for the first 48hrs after your procedure. After this time, if you are feeling well and not taking any medication which can cause drowsiness, you should be able to drive. Remember, for your own safety and that of others, you must have the strength and movement to be able to do an emergency stop.

You should also contact your insurance company to make sure you are covered when you decide to drive again.

Health conditions such as diabetes, sleep apnoea and hypertension

These health conditions should improve as you lose weight and make healthy lifestyle choices. We recommend that you organise a review with your GP or specialists who help you manage these conditions as your medications may need changing. Try to ensure that you make an appointment with your GP within 2 weeks of your discharge and arrange regular reviews.

If you are diabetic it is important that you monitor your blood sugars after your operation as your medications may have been changed prior to you being discharged from the hospital. **If you have Type 1 diabetes you should never stop taking insulin.**

What can I expect after having the balloon placed?

During the first few days you will feel uncomfortable as your stomach gets used to the balloon. You are very likely to experience nausea, vomiting, bloating, diarrhoea and cramping until your body adjusts to the balloon. The length of time it takes for the body to adjust varies from one person to another and can take up to 2 weeks or longer. It is vitally important that you drink plenty of fluids during this time to keep you hydrated.

Eating and drinking post Intra-gastric balloon

Your diet must be built up gradually after the balloon has been placed to minimise symptoms. There are 4 stages of diet that you will need to progress through:

- Fluids only
- Smooth, puree texture foods
- Soft foods
- Normal texture foods

Day 1- Water Only

- Drink cold water very slowly in small sips or take it from a teaspoon.
- Wait 1-2 minutes between each sip.
- Do not drink more than 100ml (1/2 cup) at any one time.
- Wait for at least 10 minutes between drinks.

If you do not follow these guidelines you are likely to experience increased nausea and vomiting.

Day 2-3- Fluids only

Aim to have at least 2 litres of low-calorie fluids daily. This may be difficult to start with, but you must build up gradually taking small sips frequently to prevent dehydration.

As you are not eating at this stage it is important to aim to include high protein liquids. Aim to have the following per day:

- 3-4 items from the 'protein' list
- 1-2 items from the 'occasional' list (optional)
- Make the remainder of the 2 litres up from the 'others' list

Take a dissolvable or chewable multivitamin and mineral supplement daily until you move onto normal texture foods.

Protein	Occasional	Others
400ml (2/3pint) semi-skimmed/skimmed	150ml/small glass unsweetened fruit juice	Water (plain, or low calorie flavoured) NOT carbonated

milk/soya milk (with added calcium)		
2 smooth diet yoghurts (125g each) to blend with milk/water to a drinkable consistency	1 glass (200ml) vegetable juice	No added sugar squash
1 x 325ml Slimfast or similar brand	1 x 100ml low fat, low sugar Actimel or similar	Oxo/Bovril/Marmite/Stock cubes (limit if you have high blood pressure due to salt content)
3 heaped tbsp. skimmed milk powder	100-150ml smoothie	Soups (you may need to dilute with extra water/stock/milk, and sieve to ensure there are no bits)
15g Protein powder e.g. soya or egg (from health food stores)	Low calorie hot chocolate/Ovaltine/Horlicks	Miso powder (sieved) Tea/Coffee/Herbal teas

Day 4-7- Smooth puree foods

Puree foods should have a smooth consistency and be free from lumps. They should be moist and of a “spoonable” consistency. You will need a blender, liquidiser or food processor. If you have a freezer, it is often easier to process several portions at once then freeze the extra portions. This can also help you to manage the portion sizes.

Top tip: Freeze puree foods in an ice cube tray, these individual portions will be approximately 1 dessertspoon and will help with portion control.

To puree food:

- Cook meat, fish, potato or vegetables.
- Remove any skin, gristle, tough skins and large seeds.
- Cut into small chunks.
- Add extra liquids such as skimmed milk, clear soup, stock, fat-free gravy or sauce, then blend.
- Adjust the flavour by using herbs, spices, lemon juice, tomato puree etc.

If you find that you are having difficulty managing certain foods, check that you have added enough liquid and that it has been blended well enough and sieved to remove all lumps if necessary. Meat, poultry and fish can be more difficult to blend to a pureed consistency. You may need to start with very small amounts of these foods and be more creative with your food choices.

Recommendations:

- Start by eating up to 6 small puree ‘meals’ per day. The food that you choose should be low fat and low sugar. Ensure there is a minimum 45minute break between meals.
- Your portion sizes should be around 3-6 tbsp. per meal. Aim not to exceed 6 tbsp. even if you feel you could eat more.
- Serve your meals on a 7inch side plate.
- Eat very slowly, taking at least 20 minutes for each meal to recognise the new feeling of your stomach filling up.
- Stop eating at the first sign of satisfaction- do not aim to eat until you are full.
- Drink frequently before your meal then leave at least 45minutes after your meal before drinking again.
- Consume a minimum of 2 litres of fluids per day.
- Consume low calorie fluids, avoid carbonated drinks and alcohol. Limit tea and coffee to about 4 cups per day to avoid excess caffeine.
- Continue to take a dissolvable or chewable multivitamin and mineral supplement daily until you move onto normal texture foods.

Foods to include in the puree stage:

Breakfast:

- ½ Weetabix with skimmed milk
- 2-4 dessert spoons of ReadyBrek or porridge
- Milk fruit smoothie (blend 100-200mls skimmed milk with 1-2 portions of fruit)
- Yoghurt fruit smoothie (blend ½ of a 125g pot diet yoghurt with 2-3 teaspoons of pureed fruit)
- Alternatively, add 2-3 teaspoons of pureed fruit to your ReadyBrek or porridge

Main Meals:

- **Thick soups** containing lentils, pulses such as chickpeas, borlotti beans or other beans, or pureed chicken or fish and vegetables. Aim for a maximum of 4 dessert spoons of soup.

These can either be homemade or shop-bought, but remember the soup must contain protein. If the soup is too thick you will need to add more stock, milk or water to thin it down to a pureed consistency.

- **Pureed minced lamb, beef, pork or turkey, quorn or tofu.** Aim for 4 teaspoons and eat with mashed potato and (maximum 2-3 teaspoons).

Use a low fat sauce or gravy to make a smooth, pureed consistency.

- **Dhal** is a spiced dish made using yellow split peas, or red or yellow lentils. Split peas require soaking but lentils do not.

- **Lentils** can be cooked and a variety of different foods added to taste. Try cooking lentils and adding some extra low fat cheese spread or crushed garlic, blended tinned tomatoes or herbs or spices of your choice.
- **Cottage cheese** (low fat variety). This is a great, low fat source of protein and can be eaten with mashed potato. If the consistency is not smooth enough, it can easily be mashed with a fork and a little milk added to soften.
- **Spreadable cheese** (extra light variety). Again this can be added to mashed potato to add protein. The cheese portions/triangles are a good way to help with portion control.
- **Tinned plum tomatoes**. These can be used as a useful store cupboard addition to minced meats or added to soups (for example, lentil and tomato soup). Remember to blend them to a smooth consistency.

Sample meal plan- puree stage

8.00am	½ Weetabix with skimmed milk <i>or</i> 3-6 dessert spoons of thin porridge or Readybrek made with skimmed milk (made up quantity)
9.30am	coffee made with 100mls fortified skimmed milk
11.00am	½ of a 125g pot of diet yoghurt or diet fromage frais
12.30pm	4 teaspoons of pureed chicken <i>or</i> fish in a low fat/fat free sauce <i>and</i> 2-3 teaspoons of mashed potato
2.00pm	150ml tea or coffee with milk
3.30pm	100ml fortified skimmed milk <i>or</i> ½ 125g pot diet yogurt <i>or</i> 3-4 teaspoons pureed fruit
6.00pm	4 teaspoons of pureed chicken <i>or</i> fish in a low fat sauce <i>and</i> 2-3 teaspoons mashed potato
7.30pm	Milky drink made with 100mls fortified skimmed milk
9.00pm	200mls Light Ovaltine or Horlicks (Original) drink made up with water

Day 8-10- Soft foods

It is best to avoid more 'difficult' foods at this stage, these could include red meat, shellfish, bread (especially fresh, doughy white bread), stringy fruit and vegetables and those with skins, dried fruit, nuts and sometimes rice. Fish and white meat are generally softer than red meat. Well-cooked lean minced meat with a little sauce will work well. Add gravy and low fat or fat free sauce during this time to ensure that foods are soft.

Recommendations:

- Once you feel comfortable with 5-6 small meals move up to 3 meals per day. The food that you choose should be low fat and low sugar.
- Your portion sizes should be around 3-6 tbsp. per meal. Aim not to exceed 6 tbsp. even if you feel you could eat more.
- Serve your meals on a 7inch side plate.
- Eat very slowly, taking at least 20 minutes for each meal to recognise the new feeling of your stomach filling up.
- Stop eating at the first sign of satisfaction- do not aim to eat until you are full.
- At this stage food can contain soft lumps but no hard lumps e.g. skins, pips etc. as these may cause pain or get stuck on the balloon.
- Drink frequently before your meal then leave at least 45minutes after your meal before drinking again.
- Consume a minimum of 2 litres of fluids per day.
- Consume low calorie fluids, avoid carbonated drinks and alcohol. Limit tea and coffee to about 4 cups per day to avoid excess caffeine.

- Continue to take a dissolvable or chewable multivitamin and mineral supplement daily until you move onto normal texture foods.
- Wait at least 2hrs after eating to go to bed.

Foods to include in the soft stage

Breakfast:

- 1 Weetabix or Oatibix with skimmed milk
- 3-6 dessert spoons of Readybrek or porridge
- 3-6 dessert spoons of branflakes or Special K with skimmed or semi-skimmed milk
- ½ slice toast with 1 soft scrambled egg

Main Meals:

Aim for a maximum of 6 dessert spoons of overall serving of main meal which should include protein and carbohydrate.

- **Stews or casseroles** containing lentils, pulses or peas, or small, well cooked pieces of poultry, meat and vegetables.

The stew or casserole can be served with a small portion of boiled potatoes or boiled or roasted sweet potato, or a small portion of grains such as couscous, bulgar wheat or rice or soft cooked pasta.
- **Minced meat or poultry dishes** such as cottage pie, shepherds' pie or turkey mince *served with gravy and potatoes or grains as above and softly cooked fresh, frozen or tinned vegetables. Maximum 6 dessert spoons per overall serving.*
- **Bolognese or chilli con carne** made with lean mince served with softly cooked pasta or rice.
- **Curry** made with chicken, tofu or vegetables and low fat tomato sauces (e.g. rogan josh, balti, jalfrezi). Avoid creamy or coconut based curries which are high in fat served with boiled rice.
- **Lasagne or Cannelloni** made with low fat cheese and skimmed milk *or a low fat or diet variety of ready meal*
- **Soft omelette or scrambled egg** (1 medium egg)

- **White poached fish** served with a white low fat sauce *or* herbs and lemon.
- **Meat alternatives such as tofu or quorn pieces** can be served with soft potatoes, grains or pasta and vegetables as above.
- **Fish pie** made with low fat sauce *or* low fat or diet variety of ready meal.
- **Macaroni cheese** made with low fat cheese and skimmed milk
- **Dahl and lentil dishes** as listed in the pureed diet stage can be used in this stage as an accompaniment to minced meat or soft roasted vegetables.
- **Risotto** made with soft vegetables and low fat cheese
- **Baked beans (2-3 dessert spoons)** served on ½ slice of toast
- **Cauliflower or broccoli cheese** made with low fat cheese and skimmed milk
- **Poached or casseroled chicken breast** (¼ of a small chicken breast)
- **Cottage cheese** (low fat variety) with garlic, herbs or pineapple. This is a great, low fat source of protein and can be eaten with 1-2 low fat crispbreads or crackers.
- **Spreadable cheese** (extra light variety). Again this can be served with low fat crispbreads or crackers. Cheese portions/triangles are a good way to help with portion control.
- **Hummous** (low fat variety) served with 1-2 low fat crispbread or crackers
- **Tinned plum tomatoes.** Serve as tomatoes on toast or as a vegetable accompaniment with minced meat or with boiled potatoes.
- **Other suitable vegetables: carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, courgette, fork mashed swede**

Sample meal plan- soft stage

Breakfast 8am	1 Weetabix with skimmed milk <i>or</i> 3-6 dessert spoons thick porridge or Readybrek <i>or</i> ½ slice toast with a scraping of low fat spread and 1 medium poached egg
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Mid Morning 10.30am	Coffee made with 100mls fortified skimmed milk <i>or</i> ½ x 125g pot of diet yoghurt or diet fromage frais
Lunch 12.30pm	1-2 low fat crisp-breads or crackers <i>or</i> ½ slice toast <i>with</i> 3-4 teaspoons low fat cottage cheese <i>or</i> 1 soft scrambled egg
Mid Afternoon 3.30pm	1 portion of soft fruit <i>or</i> 2 dessertspoons stewed or mashed fruit (no skin pith or pips)
Evening Meal 6pm	3-4 teaspoons minced meat or casseroled chicken or fish in sauce <i>and</i> 2-3 teaspoons mashed potato or soft cooked pasta <i>and</i> 2-3 teaspoons mashed soft vegetables
Evening 8pm	Drinks – low calorie

After 10 days- Normal texture foods

This is the stage where you will really learn to work with your gastric balloon and start to develop lifelong habits. You must now move completely on to dry, solid textured foods and avoid soft and sloppy foods. Dry solid foods will leave you satisfied for longer.

The most important thing at this stage is to start to recognise the new feelings of satisfaction and distinguish physical hunger from ‘head hunger’. We eat for many reasons and a lot of these have nothing to do with physical hunger. We sometimes eat for comfort, pleasure, habit, boredom because we’re stressed or tired. We may eat because our stomach is making rumbling or gurgling noises but these signals do not necessarily mean that we are physically hungry. When you eat for reasons other than physical hunger often you will not feel satisfied because your body did not need food. The balloon will not help with this head/emotional hunger. It is therefore essential that you find strategies to help tackle these times. For example, de-stressing by reading a good book or going for a walk.

At this stage it is important to avoid foods from the previous stages such as milkshakes, smoothies, foods with lots of sauces or gravy. These foods pass easily over the balloon and you will soon feel hungry again. These types of foods were important in the first few days whilst you were getting used to your balloon but now may prevent you from losing weight. It is also important to avoid high

calorie crunchy foods such as crisps and biscuits which when chewed well dissolve and pass through the stomach easily.

For your balloon to be effective you must eat slowly and chew well. This will help you to recognise the feeling of satisfaction and stop eating at an appropriate time. You should now be able to manage most foods however there are some foods that people may find more difficult e.g. red meat, shellfish, bread (especially very fresh), fibrous fruit and vegetables and nuts. If you experience discomfort on eating, try the food again a week or two later chewing for even longer and taking smaller bite sizes.

Top-up your nutrition

You must take a complete A-Z multivitamin and mineral supplement however this no longer needs to be chewable. As your nutritional intake is limited, you will need to take this additional multivitamin and mineral supplement to meet your nutritional requirements.

It is important to get into the habit of taking your supplements every day.

General tips of eating with your Intra-gastric balloon:

- Eat 3 small meals per day at regular intervals avoid snacks between meals
- Aim to eat small portions e.g. from a 7inch side plate
- Eat slowly and chew foods well- at least 20 times
- Think about the proportion of the different food groups on your plate. Aim for ½ plate vegetables/salad, ¼ starchy carbohydrate e.g. potato/pasta, ¼ lean protein e.g. chicken/fish/pulses
- Choose products which are low in fat and sugar
- Limit spicy foods that may irritate your stomach
- Avoid foods that you do not tolerate well
- Do not eat late at night- wait at least 2hrs after eating before going to bed

- Drinks should be low calorie/calorie free
- Avoid carbonated/fizzy drinks
- Wait at least 45minutes after each meal before drinking- then drink low calorie fluids to rinse the balloon clean
- Ensure you drink between 2-2.5 litres of fluids per day
- Avoid very strong coffee and limit tea and coffee consumption to about 4 cups per day to avoid excess caffeine
- Wait at least 2hrs after eating to go to bed to prevent reflux
- Take a daily complete A-Z multivitamin and mineral supplement
- Aim for 800 calories per day and 60g protein

You may need to progress slower than the above guidance depending on your symptoms. If this is the case you can break the steps down into smaller steps for example starting with thinner liquids such as broth and then increasing to thicker liquids such as milk then moving onto yoghurt.

Alcohol and the Intra gastric Balloon

It is advisable to avoid alcohol for at least the first few weeks after the balloon. Following this, if you are losing weight and eating small amounts your tolerance for alcohol will severely reduce so you must be cautious. Alcohol is also very high in calories and often associated with eating. Therefore it may not be helpful in your weight loss attempt. Consuming alcohol can also increase symptoms of heartburn.

Removal of your Intra gastric Balloon

After 6-12 months the balloon must be removed for safety reasons regardless of results. This is a short procedure in endoscopy similar to its placement. Prior to removal it is essential that you follow the guidance below to make the procedure safer and easier (your Dietitian will discuss this in more detail with you at the time).

- 4 days before removal go on to a very soft, low fibre diet. You must avoid high fibre foods such as wholegrain carbohydrates, skins of fruits and vegetables, bran, beans and pulses. This will be similar textures to the soft diet you followed days 8-10 post placement.
- 1 day before removal, fluids only (no solid/puree foods) e.g. milk, sugar free squash, SlimFast. Similar to days 2-3 post placement.
- Midnight before the procedure water only.

It is essential after removal that you carry on the positive changes you have made to prevent weight re-gain. The balloon should have acted as a training tool to allow you to make significant changes.

Points for success

Success following your procedure can be improved by following the points listed below:

- Attend all follow-up appointments with the bariatric team. If you think you have not received a review appointment, or you would like to organise a review appointment please do contact us to arrange this for you. We ask that you share the responsibility for ensuring you receive regular reviews with our team.
- Remember life-long dietary and lifestyle changes are needed for success. Learn to chew your food well and eat s-l-o-w-l-y.
- Plan ahead- make sure you have suitable foods and drinks in the house for each stage of the diet. Also make sure that you have a good supply of all medications and supplements that you need.
- Regular exercise is important to help you achieve long term weight loss and improve your health. Build up your exercise regime slowly to avoid injury. Recording your progress can help keep you motivated.
- Contact your bariatric team if you are failing to lose weight.
- Take all medications as prescribed.
- If you think you are experiencing any of the symptoms listed in the risk section, particularly related to the balloon deflating you must contact the bariatric team or an emergency department immediately. If you continue to be sick regularly it is also important that you contact the bariatric team.
- You must agree to attend to have the balloon removed at 6-12 months regardless of results.

What to do in an emergency

If you experience any of the following symptoms there may be a problem with your balloon that could be a medical emergency:

- A sudden loss of satisfaction from food
- An increase in hunger/appetite
- Being able to tolerate larger portions of food
- A sudden change of feeling in your stomach

- Persistent vomiting
- Severe abdominal pain
- Severe constipation associated with pain
- Unable tolerate food or fluids

In this situation it is vital that you immediately contact the bariatric team. If out of hours, please contact your GP or out of hours service (NHS 111) and request an urgent referral to Surgical Emergency Unit (SEU) at the John Radcliffe Hospital. Alternatively, you can attend your nearest emergency department but please take this information sheet with you and inform them that you have an Intra-gastric Balloon.