

## Eating and Drinking Long-term Following a Gastric Bypass

### What is a Normal Diet Following a Gastric Bypass?

You may now be managing a normal consistency diet but do not be concerned if you continue to struggle to eat certain textures of foods. Continue to add new foods slowly, one at a time and over the coming months you will slowly be able to increase the variety of foods you are eating. Raw fruit and vegetables can be added in as tolerated; however, you may wish to avoid the skins of certain fruit and vegetables if they are very fibrous or stringy e.g. oranges, celery.

Some foods may be difficult to manage, and you may need to avoid certain meats or vegetables for many months. It is important to eat a variety of foods and remember that your tastes will have changed, so this is the time to try new foods!

In order to get the best from your surgery and reduce the risk of weight regain, you will need to:

- **Eat a protein rich, low calorie diet**
- Follow a low fat and low sugar diet for life
- Consume around **60g protein per day**
- Keep to small, balanced, portion sizes

*\*unless you have been advised to aim for a higher amount of protein*

**Getting the right balance** of the different food groups is important. Protein continues to be an important part of your meal to help reduce hunger between meals and ensure muscle mass is maintained whilst fat is lost. Your protein should be eaten first and then followed by a very small amount of carbohydrate; this may only be 1-2 teaspoons. You may not be able to manage any vegetables or salad at this point.

Your meals should continue to be low in fat and low in sugar to avoid dumping syndrome symptoms and aid weight loss.

#### **Portion Sizes**

It is also very important to control your portion sizes. Meals should fill only the centre of a ramekin or a small tea-plate (3-5 inches maximum) and not spill over the edges or be piled high. This will help to prevent your small stomach pouch from stretching, maximise your weight loss and help reduce weight regain in the future.

**Portion sizes at this stage are a guide only.** You will need to ensure that you do not exceed these quantities but also be aware that you may not be able to manage this amount. Do not be concerned if you are managing only a few teaspoons of protein, 1 or 2 teaspoons of carbohydrate and no vegetable at all.

If your weight loss starts to slow down or it is not as you or your bariatric team had expected, it is likely that your portion sizes are too large. This can be discussed with your Dietitian at your next appointment.

**You will need to remember to:**

- Chew food well and take your time with meals, although you should no longer need to puree or mash foods. Foods should be tender and chewed well)
- Incorporate regular activity into your day
- Sit down for all meals and snacks
- Put utensils down between bites
- Cut food into small pieces
- Avoid eating whilst driving
- Remove distractions whilst eating, e.g. television viewing
- Remember to taste the food and enjoy what you are eating!

**Problems following eating and drinking:**

If you do feel uncomfortable or nauseas after eating, think back and identify if you:

- have eaten too fast or not chewed your food well enough
- have eaten too much
- have not given yourself enough time to eat your meal
- have eaten the correct texture food – was it chewable?

If you vomit or feel sick at this stage, it is generally not normal, and you should be able to identify why this has happened.

Keeping a food diary can be very useful to help you identify the reason for your difficulties. It may be that you keep it for your own records or ask your Dietitian to take a look and give you advice.

## **Top Tips for eating a healthy diet following a gastric bypass**

There are five main food groups that you will need to remember when eating after your bypass surgery. The best source of vitamins and minerals is from a healthy diet so you will need to ensure that your diet includes a mix of each food group.

### **Protein foods:**

- Protein foods such as lean meat, fish, low-fat cheese, eggs, beans, peas or lentils should be included at each meal. Aim to include 2-3 varied portions of these foods per day.
- Milk and dairy foods also provide protein and are also a good source of calcium to maintain healthy bones. Low fat cheese or cottage cheese, skimmed or semi skimmed milk and low fat and low sugar yoghurts or milk puddings made with skimmed or semi skimmed milk are a good way of adding protein at main meals or between meals if you are struggling with your protein intake. Three portions of dairy foods per day should ensure you are getting enough calcium from your diet.
- Protein can be boosted at breakfast time by having a small poached/scrambled egg on a small piece of wholemeal or granary toast.

### **Carbohydrate foods:**

- Carbohydrate foods such as bread, rice, pasta, potatoes and cereals may be difficult for some to digest following surgery. Soft white doughy bread should be replaced with wholemeal or granary bread or crisp breads or low-fat crackers. Toast may be better tolerated than bread. Aim for 1 small portion of carbohydrate at most meals to ensure your blood sugar levels are controlled and you have enough energy to increase your everyday activity levels and incorporate more exercise.
- Carbohydrate foods can also be a good source of fibre if you choose wholemeal or wholegrain varieties of bread, pasta, rice etc.

### **Fruit and Vegetables:**

- Aim to consume 4-5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day. Tinned fruit in juice, a small banana or a portion of small fresh fruit will also count. Vegetables will need to be non-starchy (potato does not count towards your vegetable intake).

### **Fat and Sugary foods:**

- Use a small amount of olive or rapeseed oil for cooking and replace puddings with low fat or fat free, low sugar yoghurts. You will need to avoid calorie rich foods such as chocolate, sweets, ice cream, crisps, pastries etc which will

cause dumping. These foods will not provide any valuable nutritional value so should be avoided.

- Try to minimise the use of spreads and opt for a low-fat spread and minimise use of salad dressings (using only low calorie versions).

## **Dumping Syndrome**

Dumping Syndrome is the rapid emptying of food from your newly formed stomach pouch into the lower end of your small intestine (bowel). The small intestine fills with this partially undigested food which acts like a sponge to draw fluid into the gut and causes symptoms of dumping.

There are 2 types of dumping syndrome:

- "Early" dumping begins during or right after a meal. Symptoms of early dumping include nausea, vomiting, bloating, cramping, diarrhoea, dizziness and fatigue.
- "Late" dumping happens 1 to 3 hours after eating. Symptoms of late dumping include weakness, sweating, and dizziness.

Dumping syndrome is largely avoidable or manageable by avoiding certain foods (e.g. chocolate, biscuits, cakes, sweets, desserts, high sugar drinks) or changing eating habits and behaviours. Oily or greasy foods can also cause dumping so take care when eating out.

How to avoid/reduce symptoms:

- Avoid sugary and high fat foods
- Eat smaller meals
- Take your time with eating and chew food well
- Eat balanced meals with a protein, carbohydrate and vegetable source

Some people will be more prone to dumping than others. If dumping is a problem and there is not an obvious cause (i.e. high fat, high sugar or large food volumes) it is recommended that you keep a detailed food and symptom diary to help identify which foods are more likely to cause symptoms. You can discuss further with your Dietitian.

Foods that are higher in fibre (and less refined or processed) will take longer to breakdown and are therefore less likely to cause dumping. For example, some people may tolerate mashed potato, but others may experience dumping symptoms and only tolerate new potatoes with a fibrous skin.

Dumping syndrome can be difficult to understand and has many causes and symptoms. If you have experienced any of these symptoms, please ask to discuss your symptoms further with your Dietitian. It will be recommended that you keep a food and symptom diary for several days in advance of any discussion.

## **Multivitamin and Minerals after a Gastric Bypass**

The best source of vitamin and minerals is via your diet so it is important that you do follow a healthy, balanced diet in the long-term following your surgery. However, following your gastric bypass your food intake will greatly reduce, limiting your ability to take in enough vitamins and minerals from food. For example, it will be difficult to eat enough dairy foods so you will need to take a calcium and vitamin D supplement for life. Your Dietitian will be able to advise you on a suitable calcium and vitamin D supplement and this can be prescribed by your GP. You will also no longer be able to absorb all of the vitamins and minerals needed from food so will be reliant lifelong upon vitamin and mineral supplements to keep your levels balanced.

Absorption of a number of B vitamins will be affected by the gastric bypass surgery. You will need a regular vitamin B12 injection (every 3 months) and may also need to take an iron supplement. Your blood vitamin and mineral levels will be checked at regular intervals and your Dietitian will advise you on the correct supplements.

**Following gastric bypass surgery, it is essential that you take the vitamin and mineral supplements recommended to you by your Dietitian and/or bariatric team.**

### **Summary of Vitamin and Mineral Supplements Required Following Gastric Bypass Surgery:**

- Calcium and Vitamin D chewable tablets daily
- Multivitamin and Mineral tablet daily
- Vitamin B12 injection every 3 months
- Iron tablet daily (not always needed)
- Folate tablet daily (occasionally needed)

Suitable multivitamin and mineral supplements are Sanatogen Gold A-Z, Centrum Complete, Forceval (via GP) or an own brand complete multivitamin and mineral.

### **Multivitamin and mineral for use during the fluid, pureed and soft diet stages:**

During the first few months following your surgery you are unlikely to be able to swallow/tolerate the large multivitamin and mineral tablet. You will need to purchase a soluble or chewable alternative.

- Forceval Soluble is a complete multivitamin and mineral in soluble form. It is **not** available via your GP.
- Centrum Fruity Chewable is a chewable multivitamin and mineral supplement. Several of the levels are low therefore it is recommended that you take **2 tablets per day**.

*For further information, you can contact your Dietitian*