Post-Operative Nutrition Program: Bariatric Diet Progression

The Bariatric Diet is designed to provide fluids and nourishment while promoting weight loss. The diet is divided into 3 stages. The rate of progression varies based on individual food tolerance.

POST-OP DIET INSTRUCTIONS: BARIATRIC DIET

This post-op diet is divided into 3 stages (discussed below) to allow a gradual adjustment. It is very important to the success of your surgery to:

- Progress to each stage slowly.
- Eat at set times.
- Chew well and stop eating when you are full.

If you feel a tightness or pressure in your chest, that means you are full. Wait 30 minutes before you try to eat again.

STAGE I BARIATRIC DIET-ABOUT 2 WEEKS IN DURATION

The diet begins the day after surgery. It will last about 1-2 weeks after surgery. If clear liquids are well tolerated without vomiting, your physician will add a 4-6 ounce high protein, low calorie liquid supplement. An example would be a no sugar added instant breakfast type drink. You could add this to your meal plan 3 times daily. Carbonated beverages, caffeine, alcohol, concentrated sweets such as sugar, cakes and cookies should be avoided at this stage. **Right after surgery, you may only be able to eat 3-4 teaspoons per meal. Your maximum volume should not to exceed ¼ to ½ cup total.** Do not eat more than 1 ounce or 2 tablespoons every 15 minutes. Be sure to include a chewable multi-vitamin and mineral supplement here.

Food and beverages from the list below are allowed at set times (i.e. 8 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m.):

- Decaffeinated coffee or tea.
- 100% fruit juice.
- Crystal Light, Nutrasweet Kool-Aid.
- Diet drinks.
- Broth.
- Blenderized soup.
- Skim milk or lactaid milk.
- Sugar free jello or popsicles.
- Mashed potatoes.
- Yogurt (artificially sweetened).
- Sugar free pudding.
- Low fat cottage cheese.
- Unsweetened Apple Sauce, oatmeal, grits, Cream of Wheat.

4-6 ounces of a liquid protein supplement from the list below is recommended for snacks at 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 8 p.m. **It should take about 30 minutes to drink 8 ounces.**

Acceptable Protein Supplements:

An acceptable protein supplement has about 50 to 100 calories and 4 to 8 grams of protein per 4 ounces (1/2 cup) portion.

STAGE II BARIATRIC DIET (SOFT DIET)- ABOUT 4 WEEKS IN DURATION

About 2 weeks after surgery, your physician will progress your diet to this stage. Foods may need to be blended to the consistency of applesauce. Choose low fat foods (less than 5g of fat per serving) and avoid concentrated sweets and sugar (less than 10g of sugar per serving). **Meals should not exceed ½ to ¾ cup total.** This stage will last about 4 weeks. It is recommended that you meet with your Registered Dietitian at this stage to begin preparation for the last stage.

This stage consists of 3 meals per day with a liquid protein supplement between meals twice daily. **Do not drink liquids with foods**. You must wait 30 - 45 minutes for the pouch to empty before drinking. ***CHEW WELL.*** The food must be almost liquefied before swallowing.

Soft foods from the list below can now be slowly added to your diet:

- Soft fruit (soft canned fruit in light syrup or natural juice , banana, melon, peaches, pears, strawberries).
- Cooked vegetables.
- Toast or crackers (though not technically a soft food, becomes soft after chewing 20 times).
- Cream of Wheat or Malt-o-Meal.
- Fish.
- Eggs (scrambled, soft boiled).

STAGE III BARIATRIC DIET (REGULAR DIET)- ABOUT 6-8 WEEKS POST-OP

About 6-8 weeks after surgery, you will be advanced to food that is regular in texture. This diet should include all food groups. The diet will continue to promote weight loss. **Meals should not exceed ¾ to 1 cup total.** Your Registered Dietitian will be available to assist you in meal planning and address the need for additional behavioral strategies to make this final stage a long-term success.

Slowly add foods of regular consistency and remember:

- Eat only at your chosen meal times.
- Minimize drinking with meals. You should drink 30-45 minutes before eating. Do not start drinking again for about 2 hours after eating.
- Chew food well. Take small bites.
- Think about the portion sizes of a Lean Cuisine meal. You will be able to eat most of this.
- Make sure your meal is balanced with starch, protein and fruits or vegetables.
- When you feel full**, STOP**.

*Avoid empty calories from fats, high calorie liquids, sweets, and junk food. **These foods do not relieve hunger and will prevent you from reaching your weight loss goals. Only solid food will relieve hunger.**

Document Released: 06/23/2004 Document Re-Released: 10/15/2010
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.