

Top 12 Healthy Successful Habits of Post-op Bariatric Patients!!

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We all aim to be successful after [weight loss surgery](#), but sometimes can fall off track. There are certain habits that long term post op patients embrace which helps them stay on track. It is never too late to start adopting some of these habits and getting back on track.

Successful post op patients:

1. Always avoid drinking with meals. Drinking and eating can:
 - increase total volume the stomach can hold.
 - increase the incidence of nausea and vomiting.
 - in certain procedures it can help push food out of pouch quicker leaving patients more hungry in between meals.
2. Always have 64 oz of fluids per day.
 - dehydration can cause constipation, headaches, fatigue, dizziness, and even cardiac arrhythmias.
 - aim for 64 oz per day and don't wait for your body to send you a signal that you're thirsty since that's your body's way of saying you are dehydrated.
3. Eat slowly.
 - eating too fast can result in eating too much, which can cause nausea or vomiting.
 - eating slowly helps you learn the signal of fullness (takes 20 minutes).
 - having "one extra bite" can lead to overeating.
 - cut foods up small and set a timer if you need to.
4. Keep a food diary.
 - helps to make sure you have had your 60-80 grams protein per day.
 - helps identify any food intolerances or foods that might cause reflux.
 - lets you see what works and doesn't work.
 - increases awareness of food choices and meals eaten per day.
 - provides valuable information to your dietitian and/or surgeon for follow ups.
5. Avoid processed or white sugar.
 - in bypass patients sugar can cause dumping syndrome . Sugar can inhibit weight loss in all 3 surgical procedures: band, sleeve, and bypass.
 - sugar provides no nutritional value and can contribute to nutrient deficiencies.
 - eating sweets can grow in both frequency and amount over time.
6. Add healthy carbs, eventually.
 - you will need carbs in the form of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains which provide fiber and nutrients.
 - early on, protein is the main nutrient consumed due to the limited space of the stomach. Gradually you will learn to add healthy carbs back in.
7. Take vitamins and supplements that are recommended.
 - vitamin and mineral supplementation is not optional after surgery, since deficiencies can result.
 - not taking proper supplements can lead to irreversible health complications (osteoporosis, nerve damage, hair loss, heart complications, to name a few).
8. Follow post op diet and post surgical protocol.
 - starting solid foods too soon can increase nausea, vomiting, and food intolerances.
 - there is a protocol in place since your body needs time to heal.
 - follow guidelines provided by your office.
9. Get adequate protein.
 - protein is the most important nutrient immediately after surgery.

- using supplements post op will help you get adequate protein intake, especially when solid protein foods aren't sitting well.
 - make sure every meal has a protein. You can't skip a meal with protein and expect it to fit in later on during the day, your stomach is too small.
10. Understand that surgery is amazing, but won't solve everything.
- you still need to be active and eat healthy to get the best results.
 - you can't eat whatever you want and expect to not gain weight.
 - thinking that weight loss, despite poor nutrition and health consequences, is all that matter.
11. Weigh and measure their food
- this takes the guess work out of whether you are eating sufficiently.
 - there are a lot of myths about portion sizes so the only accurate way is to weigh!!
12. Keep exercise as part of their life.
- you don't want to think that there is no need to exercise since you'll lose weight no matter what.
 - exercise has so many more benefits than just weight loss.
 - exercise increases the pace of weight loss. Strength training will increase metabolism even after you are done working out and help lessen the effects of excess skin.