

Debbie and Nina's

# Top Ten Ways to Maintain Your Weight Loss after Bariatric Surgery

## 10. Eat Breakfast, Everyday

Most people are pretty good at eating the same breakfast day in and day out, and usually this is a healthy meal! Start your day right with some protein, fruit or vegetable and some fiber in order to start your metabolism for the day. Your surgery was designed for you to eat small amounts of food a few times per day, so you can't skip breakfast and eat more at dinnertime.



B'fast faves:

1. One cup Greek yogurt with berries
2. Two egg whites and a soy "sausage" patty in a Flatout wrap
3. Starbucks oatmeal with dried fruit, skinny latte

## 9. Save your Starches (2 servings/day)

Many of our patients find that their appetite returns about 6-9 months after surgery, and they usually find more room in their diet for starches! These are things like bread, rice, pasta, potatoes, crackers, chips, granola bars, cereal, muffins, and sweets! Our most successful patients keep their ½ cup starch servings to 2 per day, and they make sure that the starchy foods they eat are high in fiber and whole grains!



Hints:

1. Avoid starches at lunch by choosing a protein-topped salad or wrapping your sandwich in lettuce.
2. Avoid using crackers or chips as "carriers" for foods like peanut butter, tuna salad or salsa – use fresh veggies, cucumber or jicama "chips" or a spoon instead!
3. Snack on apples, carrots or string cheese instead of popcorn, crackers or cereal.

## 8. Get out of Grazing



Grazing, or continuous snacking or nibbling throughout the day can defeat your hard work to keep from regaining weight. The purpose of gastric bypass and adjustable gastric band is to create fullness after eating small portions of solid foods. After meals, your pouch will be slightly distended or stretched which creates the feeling of satiety or sense of fullness. The goal is to keep solid foods with protein and fiber in your pouch to keep you feeling fuller, longer. Take control by planning meals and sitting down for them at regular intervals.

Measure foods you are going to eat and eat them as you would a meal, one at a time. If you eat a 1 oz or ¼ cup portion of nuts over 2 hours at your desk, you won't feel full, but if you eat it as a "meal" with a small piece of fruit, you will feel sated and not hungry later on.

Tips:

1. Think of every eating occasion as a "meal". Using the word "snack" allows for poor food choices.
2. Brush your teeth or chew gum after meals or while cooking to limit snacking.
3. Keep food out of sight. Wrap it up tight and store it where you can't see it. Ban the candy jar at work.

## 7. Limit Liquid Calories

Just like grazing, liquid calories can sabotage your weight loss and maintenance efforts. Liquids pass through the pouch (and band) quickly but do not create satiety. You don't want to drink immediately after meals since that will flush the solid food through your pouch too quickly. You also don't want to drink fluids high in calories because your post-surgery anatomy will not keep you feeling full from liquids or liquidy foods. Some examples of these liquid calories or liquidy slider foods are: sugary drinks, juice, alcohol, soups, ice cream, dips, dressing, milkshakes, protein shakes, milk, or thin yogurt. Even if the food is "healthy", you should avoid it because of its texture!



Sip this:

1. Water! Hot or cold. Perhaps with a squirt of lemon, lime or orange. Or with crystal light, Wylers or sugar-free Kool-Aid.
2. On a cold day, try Celestial Seasonings Sugar Cookie or Gingerbread Spice tea or Swiss Miss no sugar added hot cocoa mix.
3. Low-sodium chicken, beef or vegetable broth helps if you crave salt or if sweet drinks are too sweet.



### 6. Go Easy on the Eating out

Most people these days have a busy lifestyle and find that eating on the run is unavoidable. Research shows that eating away from home can lead to weight gain but it is realistic to acknowledge that it will happen. Just as you

have a plan for grocery shopping, you should have a plan for when and if you eat out. An informed eater knows what they are going to eat and what's in the order! Most fast food and chain restaurants have their nutrition information available on their websites. Use these, print them, circle and highlight the best options available. Keep a sheet of paper with all of the best options at the restaurants you visit most often in your car! Use this list when you eat out and make it fit in your meal plan. Remember that part of maintaining your weight loss is moderation, which can mean eating out ONLY once in awhile. Just make sure that you know what you are eating and you won't feel guilty about it!

- Where to Nosh:
1. Duncan Donuts Egg White Turkey Sausage Flatbread (280 cal), Med Latte Lite (120 cal)
  2. KFC Grilled Chicken breast (180 cal), House salad with fat-free ranch (50 cal), 3" corn on the cob (80 cal)
  3. Taco Bell Fresco Style Pintos (120 cal), Unsweet tea (0 cal)

### 5. Exercise, Everyday

As you lose weight, you need to exercise more (harder, longer, more often) just to burn the same number of calories! Research shows that a 175 lb person who used to weigh more needs to exercise longer than a 175 lb person who has always weighed the same, just to burn the same number of calories. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines and the National Weight Control Registry state you must do 60-90 min DAILY to prevent weight regain after significant weight loss. Bottom line: strive to do more every day.



- In 45 minutes, a 175 lb person will burn:
- 300 calories walking at 4 mph (15 min mile)
  - 275 calories dancing
  - 360 calories leisurely swimming
  - 420 calories playing soccer
  - 50 calories watching TV

### 4. Plan, Plan, Plan Ahead! (Failure to Plan = Planning to Fail)

Establish a regular pattern of eating at planned intervals every 3-4 hours. Start within 1-2 hours of waking and count out every 3-4 hours. Planning only requires that you know what you are going to eat before you eat it! The trick here is putting pen to paper and writing it down! Even the most experienced dietitians have to create a plan before going shopping for the week. Make a plan for the week's meals and translate into a grocery list. Take advantage of leftovers for the next day's lunch. This will help you stick to your plan and save money!



- Each meal should have:
- 2-3 oz. of lean protein, like grilled chicken OR 2-3 egg whites OR 1 cup beans
  - ½ - 1 cup of veggies like broccoli, carrots, squash
  - Not more than ½ cup starch

### 3. Keep food logs

Research shows that if you write down everything you eat, you will lose twice as much weight! Food journaling makes you accountable for every bite that you take, and can really show you your own problem areas. Now, it doesn't matter what way you choose to do this: black and white notebook, an excel spreadsheet you create, a paper tool that you print and make copies of, or even any of the websites available. Just jotting it down keeps you honest and shows you what to work on. While you're at it, write down your exercise and vitamins too!



- Journal online at:
1. Thecarrot.com
  2. Sparkpeople.com
  3. Livestrong/thedailyplate.com

## 2. Rely on your Support System



You are different. You cannot tell from the outside that you had bariatric surgery. Once you lose the weight, many will never know you ever struggled! Surround yourself with people who can identify what life after surgery is like in order to keep your eye on the ball! Use your bariatric surgery program support groups or online support groups to reach out to others in similar situations.

Who can you count on?

1. Your surgery team
2. Yourself!

## 1. Follow up FOR LIFE

To find a Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence near you, visit [www.surgicalreview.org](http://www.surgicalreview.org)

Vitamins/Minerals are for LIFE, not just while you are losing weight! So are annual visits with your surgery team! You need lifetime follow up to monitor your nutrition status, labwork, and weight. At the very least, let your surgery team know how awesome you are doing!



MUSC Bariatric Surgery Program ~(843)876-4867~  
[www.mushealth.com/weightlossurgery](http://www.mushealth.com/weightlossurgery)