

# The Recommended Pre-Operative Diet For Bariatric Weight Loss Surgery

It is essential for patients who are preparing to have **bariatric surgery** to eat the right foods prior to their surgery. This will help to reduce the amount of fat that has been stored in the liver and to get the body ready for surgery. The pre-op diet is just one of the many changes that are required of all weight loss surgery patients: a number of life-altering adjustments and new habits will need to be learned, for both the pre-surgery and post-surgery periods. Your bariatric surgeon or a dietitian can give you the information you need for making important dietary changes. Don't lose sight of the fact that following nutritional guidelines is a critical part of the weight loss process. Many patients' eating habits have grown slack over the years. But once the weight loss surgery date nears, all former ideas about food will have to change; for example, the types of food you eat, the size of portions and how you eat them will all be major considerations. Your diet will start to change before you ever enter the hospital or clinic for your surgery. By then, you will have reached a point where you need to prepare your body for the upcoming procedure. The **pre-surgery bariatric diet** is vital for patients for a number of reasons:

- It will help to reduce abdominal fat and fat stored in the liver



- It will protect muscle tissue. On a reduced calorie diet, an increase in protein will stop the body from using muscle tissue as a source of energy and will make it burn fat instead
- The body will be properly prepared for surgery and recovery
- It gets the patient prepared for the post-surgery diet. The two are actually similar – featuring a reduction in calories and the addition of foods that are high protein, low-fat, and low in carbohydrates.

## How Long Should I be on the Pre-Operative Diet

The **pre-operative diet** is an essential phase for all weight loss surgical patients; however, the time frame and food items that can be eaten are determined by the patient's weight and the type of surgery he or she is having. **For Vertical Sleeve Gastrectomy patients may begin their pre-op diet only a couple of weeks prior to the procedure.** The patients with BMI 55 and above may require a patient to begin a pre-op diet as long as two to three months before surgery.

## What is the Benefit of a Pre-Operative Bariatric Diet?

Patients who can successfully lose some of their excess weight before their surgery often face fewer complications due to surgery. The main reason to eliminate pounds before surgery is to get rid of as much abdominal fat and fat stored in the liver as possible. When the liver is smaller, laparoscopic surgery can be done more quickly and safely. The amount of pre-surgery weight you need to lose will be determined by your bariatric surgeon, based on your current weight and health, and the type of procedure you are having. In addition to advising you on your **pre-op diet**, your **bariatric surgeon** will also make a few other essential recommendations, such as:

- Stop smoking
- Don't drink alcohol
- Avoid bingeing between meals
- Don't take certain over-the-counter medications and prescription medications without the approval of your surgeon

Following your surgeon's dietary restrictions and other guidelines before surgery is crucial for a safe and effective surgery and aftermath. The **pre-surgery diet** may seem drastic, but it does prepare your body for the monumental changes it is about to undergo. And learning to re-think the way you eat – and why and how you eat – beforehand is an excellent way to retrain yourself to follow good eating habits for the rest of your life.

## Diet: 2 weeks before surgery.

1000 calorie a day, High protein (at least 50 grams), Low fat (less than 30 grams).

Unlimited (at least 64 oz. a day) clear no sugar liquids.

Substitute one or two of your daily meals with Premier or similar bariatric low calorie high protein shake starting at least two weeks before surgery.