

# Nutrition: Before and After Surgery

## Nutrition recommendations for before and after your surgery

Optimal nutrition leading up to your surgery can help you to better tolerate your procedure, promote wound healing, and prevent complications. After your surgery, adequate nutrition can help to speed up recovery by providing the energy and nutrients needed for wound healing and increased physical activity.

### Recommendations Prior to Surgery:

- **Weight loss or weight restoration may reduce risk of post-operative complications.** Ask your doctor if weight loss or weight restoration should be achieved before your procedure. If so, consider requesting a consult for nutrition counseling.
- **Stay hydrated.** Most adults need at least 8 (8 oz) glasses of water per day (64 oz total). Avoid sugary beverages that raise your blood sugar.
- **Focus on nutrient-dense foods** such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, heart-healthy fats, low fat dairy products, and lean proteins like fish and chicken. Aim to eat 3 servings of vegetables and 2 servings of fruits per day.
- **The day before your surgery,** follow your doctor and nurse's instructions on when to stop eating and drinking before your procedure.
- Please be sure to let us know if you have **special dietary restrictions** at least one week prior to your surgery. Examples may include following a vegan or Kosher diet; or, having multiple food allergies.

### Recommendations After Surgery:

- Some patients follow a "clear liquid diet" after surgery. You can eat more when your nurse and physician feel you are ready to tolerate solid foods.
- **Stay hydrated.** Proper hydration is not only necessary for your body, it will also help you feel better as you recover.
- **Make sure to eat enough protein.** Your protein needs increase after your procedure because proteins help your body to build healthy, new tissue and heal wounds. Include a serving of protein with every meal. Foods that are high in protein include meats, fish, legumes (beans and lentils), tofu, milk, nuts, and yogurt (especially Greek yogurt).
- **Eat at least 3 times per day.** Eating more frequently during the day will help to promote gastrointestinal motility and will help to stabilize blood sugar. Try to eat a moderate sized meal or a snack at least 3 times per day.
- **Some medications** may affect your appetite following surgery; however, it is important to continue eating nutritious foods throughout your recovery. Good nutrition helps your body to heal!

Inpatient Registered Dietitians are available to answer any questions that you might have during your stay. Please let your care team know if you would like to meet with a Dietitian.