

Eating techniques & nutritional guidelines for bariatric surgery



Eat slowly

- Take 20–30 minutes to eat a meal
- Eat with less dominant hand
- Put the utensil down between each bite

Take small bites

- Use an infant or toddler spoon
- Use chopsticks

Chew your food well

- Chew your food about 15–20 times
- Do not drink with your meal
- Wait 30 minutes to drink after your meal

Avoid foods high in sugar and fat

- Candy, sweets, cookies, cake, pie
- Fried foods such as chips and fries

Liquids to avoid

- High calorie drinks (specialty coffees, sweet tea, pop, juice)
- Caffeine
- Carbonation
- Alcohol

Use portion control

- Use measuring cups and spoons, food scale, small plates or pre-portioned plates

Drink at least 64 ounces of water/day

- Keep water close by
- Zero calorie flavored water may count for 32 ounces of total
- Try adding citrus fruits (lemon, lime, orange), fresh herbs or extracts like orange blossom to water

Consume adequate amount of protein each day (60–80 grams/day)

- Meat: chicken, turkey, fish, pork, lean beef
- Dairy: skim or 1% milk, low-fat cheese, Greek yogurt, cottage cheese
- Whey protein mixed with skim or unsweetened milk, water or ready-to-drink protein drinks
- Plant-based proteins: soy products, seitan, legumes, meat substitutes

Increase fruit and vegetables

- Aim for 5 servings (1/2 cup each) of fruits and vegetables every day

Keys to lifelong success

- Tracking all food and beverage intake in a journal or online food tracker (MyFitnessPal, FatSecret)
- Vitamin/mineral supplements
- Physician/dietitian visits
- Exercise: moderate activity, 150 minutes/week

Following the eating techniques and nutritional guidelines should prevent weight gain during our program. If you begin to struggle in your weight loss journey, please reach out to your MercyOne Bariatric Surgery team.