



Gastric Band Surgery Healthy Eating Guidelines

**Weight Loss
Surgery Service**

Introduction

Gastric banding is a restrictive procedure in which a band is placed around the top part of the stomach. This creates a small pouch above the band, with the main part of the stomach below.

It is important to follow these dietary guidelines carefully to prevent pain on eating, vomiting or damage to the tissues which hold the band in position or band slippage.

This operation will enable you to lose weight provided you also work on changes to your lifestyle. The quality of food you eat is very important to ensure you get the most success from your surgery.

Your diet needs to be well balanced and healthy and you need to be active, this will strongly influence how successful your weight loss is.

Your weight loss should be steady for approximately 2 years following gastric band surgery; after this additional weight loss will be difficult. Some people do not lose weight until their gastric band has been adjusted to its optimal zone.

It is important to always choose low fat and low sugar food and fluids to optimise your weight loss.

Follow the dietary guidelines in this booklet for each phase of your recovery. It is important to progress with the textures of your food carefully to allow time for your body to recover from the surgery and adapt to food again.

You must also follow the ‘golden rules’ below in order to attain a weight that is close to your ideal body weight and to maintain your weight lost.

‘Golden rules’ for success

- Eat slowly (put your cutlery down between bites to help slow you down)
- Chew food well
- Stop as soon as you feel full (heavy in your chest)
- Do not eat and drink at the same time—have a drink 10–15 minutes before meal times and wait 30 minutes after eating before drinking
- Take small mouthfuls—using smaller cutlery can be helpful
- Avoid distractions at meal times—sit at the table and turn the TV off
- Use a tea plate rather than a dinner plate
- Sit in an upright position when eating and rest afterwards
- Aim for 3 small meals per day with small snacks in between if needed
- Eat high fibre, dry textured foods to get the most restriction from your band
- Avoid drinks that are high in calories and avoid fizzy/carbonated drinks

Dietary advancement

Below are the dietary advancements you will need to follow after surgery.

The dietitian will see you when you are in hospital and advise you when you need to start and finish each phase.

Some people may progress at a slightly different rate.

Phase 1 (free fluid phase)

(You usually go home during this phase)

Begin: Day of surgery (Day 0)

Duration: 1 week

Food type: Free fluids

Amount: 3–6 servings per day—125–190ml/ $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ cups maximum per serving

Fluid goal: 1,500ml/6 cups per day.

Phase 2 (purée phase)

Begin: Day 8 (~week 2)

Duration: 1 week

Food type: Purée

Amount: 3–6 servings per day—125–190ml/ $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ cups maximum per serving

Fluid goal: 1,500–2,000ml/6–8 cups per day

Phase 4 (soft phase)

Begin: Day 15 (~week 3)

Duration: 2 weeks

Food type: Soft

Amount: 3 meals + 3 snacks per day—250ml/1 cup maximum per meal

Fluid goal: 1,500–2,000ml/6–8 cups per day

Phase 5 (regular diet)

Begin: day 29 (~week 5)

Duration: ongoing

Food type: solid

Amount: 3 meals + 3 snacks per day—250ml/1 cup maximum per meal

Fluid goal: 1,500–2,000ml/6–8 cups per day

Free fluid phase

7 days (days 0–7) post surgery

Each meal/drink should not exceed 125–190ml/ $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup per serving and have no solid bits in it.

Aim for 1,000–1,500ml per day to avoid dehydration.

Examples of fluids:

- Skimmed milk
- Milk based drinks (low fat, fat free)
- Water
- Diluted fruit juices—no pulp (avoid orange juice as it is too acidic)
- Vegetable juices—no pulp
- Sugar-free squash

- Sugar-free jelly
- Marmite®, Bovril®, consommé, bouillon
- Thin (strained) soup
- Herb/fruit teas
- Tea and coffee—keep to a minimum as these provide almost no nutritional value (use sweeteners not sugar)

Avoid fizzy/carbonated drinks as these will make you feel uncomfortable and can cause bloating. It is important that you try to avoid these as much as possible for life.

Example meal plan for free fluid phase

Meal	Suggested menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skimmed milk
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soup (no solid bits) or• Bovril®
Supper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consommé or• Vegetable juice
Snacks (aim for 3 per day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fruit/vegetable juice• Sugar-free jelly• Skimmed milk

Start date

Finish date

Purée phase

7 days (days 8–14) post surgery

The size of your meals should not exceed 125–190ml/½–¾ cups. Take small mouthfuls, eat slowly and stop as soon as you start to feel full.

Puréed foods should be a similar consistency to baby food or apple sauce. There should be no lumps or stringy pieces—this is most easily achieved by using a food processor or handheld blender.

Put some of the water used to boil the vegetables or consommé in the blender to get the right consistency for puréed meat, fish and poultry. Remove skin, bone and gristle from meat or fish before blending.

Liquidise dishes separately—for example, separate liquidised potatoes from liquidised meats—to keep a better

appearance and taste. Liquidise in bulk and freeze—ice cube holders are useful to portion out dishes. Use herbs and spices to flavour dishes.

Remember to drink 1,500–2,000ml between meals, not with your meals.

Examples of puréed foods:

- Low fat yoghurt/low fat fromage frais/ custard
- Blended soup
- Puréed chicken, white fish or turkey (red meat is harder to purée)
- Puréed legumes or lentils
- Puréed potato
- Puréed fruit
- Soft cereals (Weetabix®, Ready Brek®) with lots of skimmed milk
- Sugar-free puddings

Example meal plan for purée phase

Meal	Suggested menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weetabix® or Ready Brek® with skimmed milk or• Low fat low sugar yoghurt or fromage frais
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blended soup made with milk or• Scrambled egg or• Puréed chicken or fish + puréed potato + puréed vegetables
Supper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Puréed chicken + puréed potato + puréed vegetables
Snacks (2–3 per day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low fat and sugar custard or• Puréed fruit or• Skimmed milk
Fluids (1,500–2,000ml per day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water• Skimmed milk• Diluted fruit juice or diet squash• Tea, coffee (try to keep to a minimum as can reduce iron absorption if taken with food)

Start date

Finish date

Soft phase

2 weeks (days 15–29) post surgery

Each meal should not exceed 190–250ml/³/₄–1 cup.

Continue eating the same sort of food you were for the purée phase, but it does not need to be blended—mashing will make it the consistency of toddler food.

It should be still soft, or able to be broken up with a fork. Keep to the same quantities and eat 4–6 times per day.

Cook all meat for longer than you would normally and use moist methods of

cooking as this will help to make the meat tenderer and easier to chew.

Examples of soft foods:

- Well cooked/mashed vegetables
- Soft minced meat with gravy
- Flaky fish
- Puréed fruits, moving onto tinned fruit gradually
- Soft cereals such as Weetabix®
- Scrambled eggs/omelette/egg custard (hard boiled eggs are not well tolerated)
- Baked beans (mashed initially)

Example meal plan for soft phase

Meal	Suggested menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weetabix® or porridge/Ready Brek® with skimmed milk or• Toast + low fat cheese or ham or egg or• Low fat yoghurt or fromage frais
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soup made with skimmed milk/meat/beans/lentils or• Scrambled egg or• Cooked fish/minced chicken or turkey/ground beef/pulses + risotto/mashed potato/winter squash
Supper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shepherd's pie or• Fish pie or• Fish/minced chicken or turkey/ground beef/low fat mild cheese + mashed potato/sweet potato/winter squash or• Crackers/toast + ham or low fat cheese
Snacks (aim for 3 per day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Custard with puréed apple or• Milk pudding (such as rice or sago) or• Low fat and sugar yoghurt or fromage frais
Fluids	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water• Skimmed milk• Diluted fruit juice or diet squash• Tea, coffee (sweetener, no sugar)

Start date

Finish date

Regular diet phase

from week 5 (day 29) post surgery—ongoing

Five weeks after surgery you can start to reintroduce more solid foods into your diet. It is important to focus on the quality of your diet at this stage to get the most benefit from your weight loss surgery and avoid weight gain before your first band fill.

Caution foods

There are some foods which are more likely to make you sick if you introduce them to early. It is important to learn about the new restriction your pouch is providing before you progress to the tougher, firmer foods.

The following foods some people find more challenging—we do not recommend you avoid them, but that you take care when you introduce them back into your diet. If you do have trouble with any foods we recommend you remove them from your diet for 2–3 weeks and then retry them.

Examples of caution foods:

- Fibrous foods such as string beans, pineapple, celery, sweet corn, fruit segments, those with pips and seeds
- Foods with a skin such as tomatoes, grapes, some fruits

- Overcooked pasta
- Dried fruit
- Firmer, chewier meats such as steak, pork or chicken if roasted or barbecued (casseroles, minced meat or pot roasts, which tenderise meat, are easiest to eat)
- Bread, particularly white, soft bread (Weight Watchers® and Nimble brands are generally better tolerated—toast is also more manageable)
- Rice
- Nuts

Successful patients who have had the gastric band have 2 things in common:

1. They follow their dietary recommendations closely (see ‘golden rules’ at beginning of booklet). They consume 3 small regular meals per day, paying special attention to the textures of their diets and not eating and drinking at the same time. Higher fibre, drier textured foods will take longer to digest and keep you fuller for longer than soft sloppy textures.
2. They initiate a regular exercise programme 40–60 minutes, 4 times per week.

Start date

Gastric band adjustments

Your first appointment for a gastric band adjustment will be 6-8 weeks following surgery. This fill is usually done under X-ray and the position of your band will also be checked at this time.

Further band fills can be arranged through the dietitian and will be held under X-ray guidance, or in the outpatient clinic rooms.

Prior to your first band fill you may start to feel hungry. This is because the band is usually empty and the swelling around the band from surgery that originally caused some feeling of restriction has reduced.

It is very important that you follow the 'golden rules' and eat healthily to avoid weight gain prior to your first band fill. We are guided by the list in the table below when deciding if more fluid is needed to tighten the band.

Sometimes we will recommend that some fluid be removed from the band. This is because when the band is too tight you may start to gain weight because you can

only tolerate liquid or very sloppy foods which tend to be higher in calories.

It is important that you come to see us to have your band adjusted as the band requires a special needle for adjustment, otherwise damage to the band could occur.

Band too loose

- Able to eat solid, crunchy foods
- Able to eat large meals
- Hungry between meals—snacking
- Gaining weight, not losing weight

Band just right

- Able to eat solid, crunchy foods
- Satisfied eating small meals
- Not hungry or snacking between meals
- Losing 1–2lb a week

Band too tight

- Only able to eat soft or sloppy diet
- Unable to eat food because it sticks and will not go through band
- Suffering from heartburn or reflux
- Not losing weight or losing too much weight

Dietitian appointments

You will be followed up regularly to monitor your progress and wellbeing.

We will monitor your weight loss and discuss any problems or difficulties you may be experiencing and help to prevent any problems becoming complications.

We will expect you to attend appointments every 3 months for the first year, 6 monthly the following year and annually thereafter.

If you have any queries or questions regarding the dietary guidelines or have started feeling, please contact us.

Specialist Dietitians in Weight Loss Surgery

T: 020 3315 8161/8178

E: obesity@chelwest.nhs.uk

Missed appointments

It is your responsibility to stay up-to-date with your clinic appointments with the weight loss surgery team at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.

It is hospital policy to discharge patients who fail to attend appointments back to their GP for their care.

If you need to change an appointment, think you should have an appointment but have not received one in the mail, or have any other questions regarding appointments, please call the Appointments Office (in the first instance) or the team.

Appointments Office

T: 020 3315 6666 (new patients)

T: 020 3315 5677/5686
(review patients)

Weight Loss Surgery team

T: 020 3315 8604

Patient support group

We would also encourage you to join our patient support group.

This is held at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, every third Tuesday of the month from 6–8pm.

Visit www.chelwest.nhs.uk/weightloss and choose 'Getting Support' from the sidebar to find out topics, venues and dates of these meetings.

The British Obesity Surgery Patient Association (www.bospa.org) also has a number of support groups within England.

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital

NHS Foundation Trust

Weight Loss Surgery Service

369 Fulham Road
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Main Switchboard

020 8746 8000

Website

www.chelwest.nhs.uk

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**Chelsea and
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