Patient Guide
Sleeve Gastrectomy Program

smartshape
WEIGHT LOSS CENTRE

Centric Health Surgical Centre
TORONTO
PREPARING FOR THE PROCEDURE

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Dear Patient,

Congratulations on your decision to have the Sleeve Gastrectomy.

I would like to thank you for choosing the SmartShape™ Weight Loss Centre. Our clinic takes pride in being Canada's national weight loss clinic. With our highly experienced medical staff and state-of-the-art facility, you have chosen the right clinic to start your journey.

You have made an important, life changing decision and it is our mission to provide you with the information and education that you need to make the most effective use of this very powerful tool. With your commitment and solid understanding of the Sleeve Gastrectomy, reaching your goals will not be far behind. The procedure is only the beginning and we are fully committed to providing you guidance and support.

We want you to feel comfortable about your upcoming procedure and have prepared this Patient Guide to allow you to acquaint yourself with our services and inform you of important guidelines to follow. Please do not hesitate in contacting the clinic with any questions or concerns that you may have.

The staff at SmartShape™ and I welcome you to our family.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Cobourn, MD
CEO & Medical Director
SmartShape™ Weight Loss Centre
Preparing for Surgery

Pre-Operative Documents

In order to prepare for your Sleeve Gastrectomy procedure, you will be required to submit all of the following pre-op documents 3 weeks before your procedure date. This is a mandatory deadline for all patients to ensure our surgeon and medical team have sufficient time. Any paperwork submission after your deadline date will result in your procedure being cancelled.

- **Pre-op History & Physical**
- **Pre-op Blood Work & ECG**
- **Consent Form** – thoroughly read and initial the bottom of each page. It is necessary for a witness (family member or friend) to sign certain pages of the form with you.
- **Patient Care Contract**
- **Pre-Op Questionnaire**
- **Non-Refundable Deposit** - If you cancel with more than two weeks’ notice, your deposit will be valid for 1 year.
- **Final Payment** – certified cheque, draft or money order made payable to the ‘Surgical Weight Loss Centre’. You may also use phone or online banking. If you are submitting your final payment via mail, please send to:

  SmartShape Weight Loss Centre  
  1413 Hurontario Street  
  Mississauga, ON L5G 3H5

Other Pre-Operative Appointments

Should your surgeon advise that you require a consultation with an anesthesiologist, please ensure that you coordinate this appointment, in advance, with your patient coordinator at Centric Health Surgical Toronto (CHST) at (416) 441 – 2111 x 224.

These appointments (including your procedure) will take place at:

Centric Health Surgical Toronto  
20 Wynford Drive, Suite 103  
Toronto, ON M3C 1J4

General Preparation

Caregiver & Accommodation

Please arrange for a caregiver (family member or friend) to pick you up from the clinic. To ensure your safety, driving yourself home or taking a taxi alone is NOT permitted. If you do not have a caregiver available, please speak with your patient coordinator and we will gladly provide you with information about private post-operative personal health care aide. We ask that your caregiver leave the clinic while you are in the operating room. It is very important that your caregiver has his/her cell phone on at all times. The nurses will call your caregiver once you are out of surgery and settled in your room. As this may take a few hours, please advise them not to worry, if they do not immediately hear from our clinic.
Visitor Policy
We allow visitors following your surgery between the hours of 4-8pm, but this is at the discretion of our nursing team. To ensure that we are providing you the environment in which you can recover accordingly, our visitors are limited to 2 guests only and we do not permit children under the age of 14.

The day after surgery you will be discharged from the hospital between 12-2pm. Please advise your caregiver not to pick you up until noon, as we need bloodwork confirmation prior to your discharge.

Expected Stay
Patients should expect to spend one night at CHST.

If you live two or more hours away, please make arrangements to stay at a hotel in close proximity to the clinic. You will need to arrive in the area one day before your procedure and remain in the area for 3 days. Please notify your patient coordinator of your room number once you check in to your hotel. A list of hotels is enclosed in this guide.

If you have children, please make arrangements to have a separate caregiver for them on the day of, and after the procedure. You are asked not to bring children to the clinic. Your caregiver will need to be exclusively devoted to your needs. If you have small children at home, please plan ahead for childcare.

Medications
Please send your patient coordinator your up-to-date list of medications with the dosage as well as any vitamin/mineral and herbal supplements that you take. It is important that all of your medications are reviewed with the nurses or surgeons prior to your procedure.

Please indicate if you are taking medications for diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, anti-depressants or blood thinner medications.

Please refrain from taking any:

1. **Anti-inflammatory medications** such as Ibuprofen, Advil or Motrin 3 days before surgery. You may resume taking this medication after 1 week post-op.

2. **Aspirin / ASA** – 1 week prior to surgery*

*Baby aspirin with 81mg dosage is fine to take up to the day before surgery

If you take these on a prescribed basis, please discuss this with your surgeon and family physician. You may take Tylenol (acetaminophen) if necessary.

If you are on blood thinners, please let your Patient Coordinator immediately. Our peri-operative nurse will instruct you as to when your blood thinners need to be stopped.

You will need to bring all of your medications to the clinic on the day of the procedure including diabetic medications, glucometer, puffers and/or CPAP machine if it applies to you. Be sure to take any high blood pressure and heart medications on the morning of the procedure with a sip of water. Please do not take your supplements, anti-depressant or cholesterol medications on the morning of surgery.

Pre-Operative Meal Plan
In order to prepare you for your procedure, your surgeon will prescribe SmartShape™ Shake, prior to surgery. The amount of time you will be on SmartShape™ Shake will depend on your surgeons’ assessment at the time of your consultation. The purpose of the pre-op regimen is to reduce the fat content and size of the liver through the process of ketosis, not simply to lose weight. By reducing the size of the liver, it makes the surgery more efficient and safer with significantly reduced risks of complications.

The Pre-Op Meal Plan has 3 components:
1. SmartShape™ Shake
2. Low Glycemic Index Vegetables
3. Supplements Regime
**SmartShape™ Shake** is a specially designed, bariatric-specific low carbohydrate, low calorie, high protein meal replacement. The formula was created to supply individuals with distinct and essential daily requirements of macro and micro-nutrients to prepare the body for surgery. Individuals should aim to consume all three shakes daily. For more information and tips on adding flavor, please refer to your Food Guide.

**Low Glycemic Index Vegetables** - In addition to the three servings (shakes) per day, you should include a maximum of 250 calories of specific, low glycemic index vegetables per day. There are particular portions specified for each glycemic vegetable that is ‘authorized’ for consumption, so please refer to your Food Guide for a complete detailed list.

**Supplements Regime** – To ensure your body receives complete nutrition in the days leading up to your procedure and during your post-op stage, it is highly recommended that you initiate specific supplements every day for the rest of your life. You should consult with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any supplement to ensure it is safe to do so.

The supplements regime includes:

- **prenatal multivitamin and mineral supplement** in the form of a tablet, one tablet per day
- **vitamin B12**, to be taken under the tongue, 500mcg per day to compliment food/fluid contributions
- **calcium** in chewable/liquid form, 500 – 600mg per day to compliment food/fluid contributions
- **vitamin D3** in chewable/liquid form 1000IU per day to compliment food/fluid contributions

For more information on your supplement regime, please refer to the Food Guide.

**Special Considerations** - If you are an individual living with diabetes, please take special precautions when you start your pre-op regimen. You should check your blood sugar at least four times per day and adjust your medications accordingly. Due to the reduced carbohydrate content, we recommend that you reduce your diabetes/blood sugar medications by approximately ½ as a starting point. It is important to notify the physician who monitors your diabetes that you will be on this meal replacement. If you have questions or concerns, please call the clinic. For more information on blood glucose, please refer to your Food Guide.

Your patient coordinator will provide you with ordering instructions and the length of time you will need to be on this meal replacement. The products can be ordered from Minogue Medical. Shipping time is approximately three to four days. For more information, please visit the company website at [www.minogue-med.com](http://www.minogue-med.com).

**Items to Prepare for Post-Operative Care**

- Accurate scale. At the clinic we use scale model XL550 from [www.myweigh.com](http://www.myweigh.com)
- SmartShape™ Shake
- Clear juice and broth
- Sugar reduced popsicles
- Plenty of water
- Chewable/liquid prenatal multivitamin & mineral supplement*
- Chewable/liquid calcium*
- Chewable/liquid Vitamin B12*
- Chewable/liquid Vitamin D3*
- Tylenol, Gravol & Gas X in liquid or chewable form
- Compression stockings (applies only to patients who are flying)

*Initiated only after approval from your GP or pharmacist

**Smoking**

If you smoke, please notify your patient coordinator. We ask you stop all nicotine containing products (smoking, nicotine patch/gum, vaping) **at least one month prior to your procedure** to reduce the risk of complications.
If you smoke, your body needs an additional 35mg of vitamin C above and beyond typical daily requirements. This can be easily achieved when individuals are consuming a regular diet, but when individuals are in their pre or post-op regime, it is much more challenging as many of the vitamin C rich foods are not authorized for ingestion.

It is important that we make sure you get all the vitamin C your body needs before and after surgery. There is no need to take large doses of vitamin C supplements, rather it is recommended that you initiate your multivitamin supplement as soon as you can and continue taking it in order to support the safest procedure possible.

Vitamin C is found in a number of common, delicious foods such as kiwi, guava, strawberries, citrus fruits (lemons, limes), papaya, mango, peppers, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, leafy vegetables, tomatoes & potatoes.

**Reporting Illnesses**
If you experience any illnesses or rashes in the abdominal area two weeks before your procedure, please inform your patient coordinator or the nurses as soon as possible.

**Swimming Pool/Hot Tubs/Jacuzzi/Spa**
Please refrain from using a hot tub, swimming pool or Jacuzzi for two weeks before your procedure.

**Day Before Your Procedure**
The day before your procedure is very important in making your experience as comfortable and safe as possible. Please go through the following reminders and ensure you are ready for your procedure.

**Checklist Phone Call** — your patient coordinator will call you the day before your procedure to provide instructions, confirm information you have given and answer any last minute questions. Your arrival time; medications to take on the morning of the procedure; and where to check-in will be discussed with you. If you do not receive information regarding your day of surgery 1 – 2 days before your scheduled procedure, please contact your Patient Coordinator at our surgical facility at Centric Health Surgical Toronto (CHST) at (416) 441 – 2111 x. 224 or via e-mail at karen.mcclenaghan@centricehealth.ca

**No Eating & Drinking After Midnight** – this includes candy, gum, and vitamins. Please hydrate yourself with plenty of water for two days prior to your procedure. Failure to follow these instructions may result in your procedure being delayed or cancelled. You may brush your teeth but be careful not to swallow any water.

**Pack a Small Tote Bag** — with socks, slippers and a housecoat to bring with you to the clinic.

**Attire** — please wear loose fitting and comfortable clothing with flat shoes. You should not wear make-up, contact lenses or nail polish. Please remove all jewellery and body piercings. If you are unable to remove your piercings, please inform your patient coordinator ahead of time. Please leave all valuables at home.

**Shower** - Please take a shower with an antibacterial soap the night before and morning of the procedure. You may use regular shampoo and deodorant, but please do not use any lotion or creams on your body.

**Hotel Listings**

**THE EDWARD HOTEL**
185 Yorkland Boulevard
North York, ON M2J 4R2
Tel: (416) 493 - 9000
Toll-Free: 1 (800) 567 – 8500
reservation.northyork@edwardvillage.com
When making your reservations, please ask for the “Centric Health” corporate rate.
Patient Guide

- Complimentary wireless Internet
- Free parking
- Complimentary local calls
- Business center
- Coffee maker
- Laundry / Dry Clean Service
- Airport transportation – please contact the hotel for more information

THE WESTIN PRINCE HOTEL
900 York Mills Road
Toronto, ON M3B 3H2
Tel: (416) 444 - 2511
Toll-Free: 1 (888) 627 - 8550

When making your reservations, please ask for the “Centric Health” corporate rate.

- Complimentary wireless Internet
- Complimentary local calls
- Business center
- Coffee maker
- Laundry / Dry Clean Service
- Parking - $12 per day

Website Resources

www.smartshape.ca
SmartShape™ Weight Loss Centre

www.centrichealthsurgicaltoronto.ca
Centric Health Surgical Toronto

www.fooducate.com

www.bodywellfitness.com

www.fitwatch.com
Free calorie counter

www.fitday.com

www.myfitnesspal.com

www.eatwise.ca

www.eatrightontario.ca

Important Contact Numbers

SmartShape™ Weight Loss Centre
1413 Hurontario Street
Mississauga, ON L5G 3H5
Local: (905) 278 – 8000
Toll-Free: 1 (888) 278 – 7952
Fax: (416) 619 - 9530

Surgeons
Dr. Neil Orzech & Dr. Chris Cobourn
Email: info@smartshape.ca

Nurse Specialists
Tammy, Sue, Tina & Debbie
Email: nurses@smartshape.ca
Ext: 243

Peri-Operative Nurse Consultant
Tina Thomas
Email: tina@smartshape.ca
Ext. 243

Registered Dietitian
Anna Maria Fruscione
Email: annamaria@smartshape.ca
Ext: 230

Patient Coordinator
Kim Midwinter
Email: kim@smartshape.ca
Ext: 308

Centric Health Surgical Toronto
20 Wynford Drive, Suite 103
Toronto, ON M3C 1J4
Local: (416) 441 - 2111
Toll-Free: 1 (888) 857 - 6069

Patient Coordinator
Karen McClenaghan
Email: karen.mcclenaghan@centrichealth.ca
Ext: 224

Other Contact Numbers
Emergency Hotline
(416) 280 - 6115

Centric Health Pharmacy
Tel: (905) 830 – 5988
Day of Surgery

Clinic Arrival – your patient coordinator will confirm the time of your procedure the day before your procedure. Please plan to arrive at the clinic 1 hour before your scheduled surgery time.

Pre-Op Room – when you arrive at the clinic, a nurse will confirm your medical history and measure your weight, blood pressure and pulse. You will be asked to change from casual attire into a clinic gown. You will meet with the surgeon and anesthetist to explain and answer any remaining questions about the procedure.

Operating Room – an intravenous (IV) line will be started before the procedure. The IV will provide medication and fluid during the procedure. The anesthetist will describe in detail what is happening as you receive your general anesthetic and carefully monitor your vital signs during the procedure.

Recovery Room – immediately after your procedure, you will be taken to the recovery room. Patients should expect to spend one night at CHST. You will be closely monitored as the anaesthesia wears off. Your surgeon will advise you, should you require more than 1 night stay. Control of pain and nausea is important. It helps prevent complications and assists in the healing process. We rely on your description of pain to assist you with recovery and pain control.

Post-Op Care

General Instructions

At the time of check-in, you will be advised of the approximate time you will be ready for pick-up following your procedure. Please provide your caregiver the following number (416) 441 – 2111 to enable them to check on your status.

Patients will be discharged with follow-up instructions and provided prescription medication prior to leaving the clinic.

Please call the clinic if you experience the following during your recovery:

- Pain that is not relieved by medication
- Bleeding or unexpected drainage from the incisions
- Temperature greater than 38°C.
- Extreme redness or swelling around the incision
- Nausea or vomiting that is persistent
- Chest pain or shortness of breath
- Pain in calf of legs
- Leg or hand swelling

If you feel that you have a medical emergency problem that cannot wait until morning, please call the answering service at (416) 280 – 6115.

Discharge (DAY 1)

After you have been discharged, you should walk around multiple times per hour. Early ambulation after surgery has been shown to decrease risk of post-operative complications.

- If you stand up too quickly, you may feel faint. To avoid this, sit up in bed for 5 minutes, then sit on the edge of the bed with your feet dangling for another 5 minutes.

- In the event that you do faint, stay lying down and have someone elevate your legs until the feeling passes—contact our clinic immediately.

- Use pillows to support your head and neck, lying flat may cause some discomfort and nausea. Bend your ankles up and down & wiggle your toes frequently to maintain circulation in your legs.
• You should have someone with you, at all
times and remain in the Toronto area or
within 2 hours driving distance, over the
next 3 days.

• You may shower, but take precautions. Use
a seat in the shower and ensure someone is
with you at all times.

• For patients who are flying back home, you
need to wear your compression stockings
for one week from the time of surgery,
including the flight home. Compression
stockings do not need to be worn at night.

• Stay hydrated! Drink plenty of fluids.

Driving – you should not operate a vehicle
for 48 hours after your procedure. Driving is
prohibited while taking narcotic medications
such as codeine. Patients who are not taking
narcotic medications can drive within a few
days, as long as the distances are short and
not too tiring.

Time Off Work – some people may require a
longer period of time to recover from a
general anesthetic but everyone should plan
to take it easy for at least one week after your
procedure. We recommend taking
approximately 2 weeks off work but this will
vary on an individual basis.

1st Week After Surgery

Keep Hydrated – it is important that you
drink adequate fluids after your procedure.
Dehydration is a concern that can be
prevented. Sip 30mL* (2 tbsp) of fluids every
15 minutes and be mindful of your urination
frequency. Check your urine color (dark) for
signs of dehydration.

*This volume is meant to be a guide. You will
learn quickly what feels comfortable and be
able to gradually increase to 60-80mL per
swallow during the first week after surgery.

Stay Mobile – you should get out of bed as
often as possible, aiming for 10 min of
walking every hour. Increase your activity as
tolerated to a minimum of 30 min per day.

For patients who are travelling during the
first week after surgery, we strongly
recommend frequent walking and stretching.
Specifically, walk 3 – 4 times per hour. This
will minimize stiffness and reduce the risk of
blood clots.

Incision sites – all of the surgical incisions
were closed beneath the skin using
dissolvable sutures. Meaning, there are no
sutures or staples that need to be removed.
The steri-strips that cover each of the wounds
are meant to remain in place until 1 week
after surgery. While they are on, you can
shower. However, we recommend trying your
best to keep them covered and dry. If they do
get wet, the strips will dry. You should not
allow the wounds to be under water during
this period.

Gas – you may experience shoulder /
abdominal pain due to gas that was
introduced during the procedure. The
discomfort is normal and will often settle
after a few days. Walking may help to pass the
gas.

Bruising – bruising and slight bleeding at the
incision site is normal. If your wounds
become red and hot to the touch, please
contact the clinic immediately.

Pain – you may feel some pain at the time of
discharge, but this will slowly dissipate over
the next couple of days. Everyone responds
differently so it is important to listen to your
body. You may also experience some
abdominal wall pain, pain around the incision
sites or muscle spasms.

It is not uncommon for your abdomen to hurt
and/or feel tight when you breathe. This is
associated with the gas that was introduced
at the time of your procedure.

Pain in the left shoulder is also very common
and may be due to repair of hiatus hernia that
is occasionally performed.

If you experience shortness of breath, chest
pain or pain in the calf of your leg, please
contact the clinic immediately. In an
EMERGENCY after hours situation, you may
call (416) 280 – 6115 or your local emergency service – 911.

**Physical Activity** – you should try to get out of bed as often as possible and walk around, after your procedure. Walk at least 30 minutes a day, as soon as you feel comfortable. Gradually increase your activity, but be careful not to overdo it. Avoid strenuous physical activity for at least 10 – 14 days. No weight lifting or sit-ups for 4 weeks after your procedure.

Once you have completely recovered from surgery, your weekly exercise goal is a minimum of 150 minutes. Meaning, you need to exercise a minimum of three times per week for less than an hour. We encourage and recommend you to increase your activity above this minimum requirement, it is imperative that you include exercise along with a healthy diet to maximize your success.

Remember that you will need to make up for the fluid lost through sweating. In order to maintain hydration, be sure to sip water before, during and after physical activity.

**Swimming / Hot Tubs / Bath Tubs** – You should avoid swimming for at least 2 weeks after your procedure, unless otherwise noted by your surgeon. Avoid hot tubs and bathtubs as well, for 4 weeks after surgery.

**Sex** – sexual relations may be resumed 2 weeks after surgery. However, it is important that female patients do not get pregnant for 12 months after surgery. It is advisable to consult with your physician before getting pregnant during the first year after your procedure. It is important that all women of childbearing age take a supplement which includes folate. Should you become pregnant ensure that you have your bloodwork checked by your physician or specialist early on in the pregnancy and at his/her discretion thereafter.

**Other Surgeries** – if you require any other surgical procedures in the future, please notify our clinic, so we can update your file.

**Follow-Up Appointments** – you should feel free to contact our clinic as necessary during the first 2 – 3 weeks following your procedure. The pathology report from the portion of your stomach that was removed will be reviewed by your surgeon. If there are any abnormal findings, we will contact you directly. A copy of the report will also be sent to your family physician, unless you specify otherwise.

**For local (GTA and surrounding areas) patients** – your Patient Coordinator will schedule your in-person visit at our Mississauga clinic, to meet with our nursing team. This will be scheduled in advance during your pre-op phase. Alternatively, you may also see your family physician.

**For out-of-province or out-of-town patients** – it is recommended that you schedule an appointment with your family physician to ensure that all of your incisions have healed appropriately and to discuss medication & lifestyle changes.

We ask that you visit your family physician, 1 month after your procedure, to both update them, as well as to include them with your new lifestyle change and weight loss journey.

To maximize your care at the clinic and for continuous communication between yourself and our team, we encourage patients to always keep in touch with our team via e-mail or phone. Patients will receive monthly e-mails from our nursing & nutritional team, but if you would like to keep us posted in between, please feel free to do so. We would love to hear from you!

**Tell Us What You Think!** – we hope the patient care and service provided by our team met or exceeded your needs. Tell us your experience with SmartShape to date by completing a quick online survey. We always appreciate the feedback from our patients and improve our processes, where necessary.

You should expect the online survey from our office in the next couple of days after your procedure. If you did not receive it, please inform our office.
**Educational Webinars** – in order to become knowledgeable regarding optimizing your lifestyle, SmartShape encourages you to sign up for the webinars hosted by our Registered Dietitian and Bariatric Program Education Coach. We recommend for you to participate in these webinars within 1 month after your surgery. Your patient coordinator will e-mail you the upcoming schedule and registration instructions. You may also view upcoming webinars on our Events Calendar on our website.

**Medications**

You may resume your *prescribed medication* when you get home. Extended release medications should be avoided for the first 4 weeks after surgery. We recommend that all medications be taken in a liquid or chewable form, so speak to your pharmacist to explore if these options are available to you. Otherwise, it is recommended that medications be crushed or capsules be opened for 1 week after your procedure. You may re-start solid medications, small to medium size (tictac or M&M size) on post-op DAY 3. For large size (jujube or Mike & Ike), you may start this post-op DAY 7.

Check with you pharmacist about crushing or opening capsules prior to doing so, in order to ensure medications will still function as needed.

**Diabetes / Blood Sugar medications** should be used cautiously. Your caloric intake will likely be much less than prior to your procedure, so your need for these medications will likely be altered. You should check your blood sugar with a blood glucose meter at least 4 times daily. If you need assistance with adjusting your medication, please contact your physician.

Do not take *aspirin or anti-inflammatory medication* (i.e. Ibuprofen, Advil, Celebrex, Aleve or Bayer) for 1 week after surgery, unless you have discussed this with the clinic. Medication will help ease the pain, but use with discretion. Take over the counter Gas-X for gas and bloating. Codeine may cause constipation. We recommend that you use milk of magnesia as per the manufacturer's suggested dosage as a temporary aid to relieve constipation. If constipation continues, consider increasing fluid intake, and adding fibre (Benefibre and/or Metamucil) to your diet to get your bowels moving. Taking Gravol elixir or a suppository will help alleviate nausea.

*If you are experiencing pain after taking your medication,* please contact the clinic immediately at (905) 278 – 8000 or toll free at 1 (888) 278 – 7952. In an **EMERGENCY after hours situation**, you may call (416) 280 – 6115 or your local emergency service – 911.

**Dietary Progression**

As you recover from your procedure, we recommend a gradual process where you will be introduced to foods of increasing texture and density. These foods will be introduced in defined stages that will minimize the risk of blockage and vomiting. It is very important that you follow these guidelines in order to give your stomach time to heal and achieve maximum benefit.

The overall strategy is to feel a sense of satiety with the smaller portion of food. With the Gastric Sleeve, the goal is to see how little you can eat and feel satisfied, NOT to see how much you can eat before feeling full.

If you are following the guidelines regarding quality and quantity of food, but still feel stomach hunger soon after eating, experience a weight plateau, and/or not seeing improvements in your well-being, please contact our Registered Dietitian.

For more information on nutritional guidelines during your post-operative stage, please refer to your Food Guide.
10 Guidelines to Live By

1. Eat Three Meals A Day – with nutrient dense protein and natural fibre. You should always try to eat protein first as it will help lead to earlier satiety. Include snacks if your next meal is greater than four hours from your last intake a day to your three meals that is high in lean protein and a source of fibre.

2. Eat Slowly! Follow the 20/20 Rule – plan to take at least 20 minutes to eat each meal. Enjoy your dining experience by taking small bites and chewing well (20 chews per bite). If you feel full you should stop. If you overeat, you may feel nauseated or vomit.

3. Reduce Your Portion Size – it is usually recommended to restrict your meal size to approximately a one cup or side plate portion of food. Use a dessert or bread plate to assist with portion control.

4. Choose Solid Food – the purpose of choosing solids whenever possible is to promote satiety for a longer period of time. High calorie liquids, soft, slider, mushy textured foods such as ice cream, chocolate, fruit juice and alcohol will pass across quickly without generating satiety signals to the brain and are then rapidly digested by the body. Therefore, they provide a large number of calories and very little satiety time often leaving individuals feeling hungry soon after.

5. Allow 45 Seconds Between Swallows – Patients should wait a minimum of 45 seconds between a swallow of solid food and sip of liquid beverage. Consuming liquids while eating may diminish the communication signals between the digestive tract and your brain resulting in a reduced feeling of satiety. This leads to more food being consumed before the hunger is gone.

6. Schedule Meal Times – it is recommended that you plan your mealtimes to allow approximately four hours between intakes. Keep yourself hydrated by drinking plenty of water between meals.

7. Keep Hydrated – drink plenty of fluids including water and other nutritious low calorie beverages with the goal of consuming 2 – 3 litres of fluid per day. Begin with a minimum of 64 oz. (8 cups) and slowly increase your intake with time. This will help keep you satisfied between meals and ensure proper hydration.

Avoid alcohol and eliminate sugar sweetened carbonated beverages as they are high in calories and have no nutritional value. Limit the consumption of sugar-free carbonated beverages and avoid excessive caffeine intake.

Try to refrain from using a straw for drinking as you may inhale air that can cause excessive burping, abdominal discomfort, bloating and/or flatulence.

8. Supplements – take a prenatal multivitamin, vitamin B12, vitamin D and a calcium supplement daily. Vitamins are better absorbed when taken with meals. Chewable vitamins may be easier for you. However, gummy supplements should be avoided. The quality of gummy supplements is far less than other chewable/liquid forms, therefore it is suggested that individuals avoid gummy supplements throughout their weight loss journey. For further supplement guidance, please consult with your primary physician, pharmacist or our Registered Dietitian.

9. Be Physically Active – Once you have completely recovered from surgery, your weekly exercise goal is a minimum of 150 minutes. Meaning, you need to exercise a minimum of three times per week for less than an hour. We encourage and recommend you to increase your activity above this minimum requirement, it is
imperative that you include exercise along with a healthy diet to maximize your success. Remember that you will need to make up for the fluid lost through sweating. In order to maintain hydration, be sure to sip water before, during and after physical activity.

10. Keep Track – it is helpful and important for patients to keep records of their progress. We recommend developing the following and bringing them with you to your appointments at the clinic.

i. Lifestyle Diary – this will help you monitor your intake and tolerances to foods. Look for patterns of food that are tolerated well and foods that are not. The lifestyle diary will also help the clinic staff provide suggestions for better nutrient balance. You may want to schedule an appointment with the dietitian to review your lifestyle diary. Please refer to your Food Guide for sample diaries and further recommendations on how to complete this type of record.

ii. Weight Records – weigh yourself once a week on the same day, on the same scale and at the same time. We do not recommend that you weigh yourself daily.

Potential Problems

Potential problems and complications can occur soon after your procedure (days or weeks) or later (months or years). Following our Food Guide and the Ten Guidelines to Live By will help prevent potential problems. Please educate yourself with the following problems to reduce risks and to better communicate to our nurses what you are experiencing.

Dehydration – this can occur when you do not take in enough fluid. Make sure to drink at least 8 cups (64 oz.) of liquids each day.

Nausea & Vomiting – there are several reasons this may occur:

- a. Eating too much
- b. Eating too fast

If you vomit regularly, or if you are unable to tolerate liquids, please call the nurses immediately.

Constipation – this can happen before or after your procedure, but can be prevented. It is usually due to diminished movement, reduced fluid intake, and decreased fibre ingestion. Individuals may choose to introduce a fibre supplement into their regime to improve bowel health, stool consistency and regularity. Fibre supplements are acceptable in both the pre-operative and post-operative stages and can by psyllium based, such as Metamucil, or insulin based like Benefibre. Once individuals reach Day 21, the solid food stage, you are encouraged to add high fibre grains, fresh fruits, vegetables and legumes to your intakes. If you are adding fibre to your day via supplements or natural sources, it is important to consume ample amounts of fluids to help move the stools along.

For constipation that last three or more days, individuals may choose to consume Milk of Magnesia and / or other laxatives and follow up with your care team or GP if the issue persists.

Reflux – this is commonly caused by stomach acid refluxing back into your esophagus. Mild reflux can be treated with medications, body position or dietary changes. If the reflux is severe or persistent, please call the clinic as persistent severe reflux can lead to damage of the lining of the esophagus.

Maladaptive Eating – occurs when individuals purposefully or subconsciously alter their behavior and/or the texture and consistency of their food. You may find the types food that you can comfortably consume are soft, slider, soupy, mushy and liquid type textures. Other behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- 1st bite syndrome – when the initial bite is so large that it causes individuals to obstruct, feel pain/pressure during the
transition to the stomach, and/or regurgitate the item which typically happens when people wait too long to eat and are absolutely famished. This leads to the rest of the meal being limited to liquids.

- Using liquids to flush food by holding food in one’s mouth until you take a sip of fluid and then swallowing.

You may not feel a sense of satiety with these liquids and if the liquids are high in calories, it may lead to a plateau in weight or even weight gain.

**Hair Loss** – hair loss is a potential side effect of any surgical procedure. It may be several months after the procedure before you notice any hair loss and several months more until you see the hair start to grow back. Although the causes of hair loss are not completely known, it may be more common in weight loss patients due to the fast-paced, significant changes in the body or patients making suboptimal nutrition choices. It is important that individuals consume the recommended amounts of protein daily with high fibre compliments and, if authorized by their GP and/or pharmacist to do so, a multivitamin as well.

**Exercise & Movement**

**Why Are Exercise & Movement Important?** Exercising (movement) each day is important to improve your cardiovascular health and will help your body use more calories each day. If you are following the food guidelines, you are already controlling the amount of calories coming into your body. By increasing your daily activities (movement) and exercising, you will increase the difference between the calories coming in and calories going out. Once you have reached your goal weight, exercise plays an important role in helping you to maintain your weight and health. Exercise also helps you build muscle mass while you are reducing fat.

Regular exercise will also increase your cardiovascular fitness, which means that your heart and lungs will have more endurance. Regular exercise can help you reduce your risks for health problems like heart attack, stroke, diabetes and high blood pressure. If you already have these health problems, exercise will make it easier to control them.

When you choose an activity, you should perform it continuously for at least ten minutes. Once you have improved your cardiovascular fitness, you should increase the duration to 20 – 30 minutes or more.

Increasing your daily activity by parking further away from stores or taking stairs instead of elevators can increase how many calories you are burning. This form of increased movement is very beneficial. Performing any physical activity for a prolonged duration will give your heart and lungs a good work out.

**6 Great Ideas for Exercise**

1. **Walking** – walk around your neighborhood, local park, high school track or use a treadmill. You can walk by yourself, with a friend, a group or at a local gym.

2. **Biking/Cycling** – you can ride your bike around your neighborhood or at a local bike trail. You may also use a stationary bike at home or at the gym.

3. **Aquafit** – many local swimming pools or clubs offer pool based exercise programs. These are helpful if you have arthritis or joint pain that keep you from participating in a land based exercise program.

4. **Team Sports** – many local churches or gyms may have basketball, baseball or tennis teams you can join.

5. **Group Classes** – local gyms usually have a variety of classes such as step aerobics, yoga or Pilates. All of these are safe after the procedure.
6. **Game Consoles** – enjoy the benefits of Wii Fit or other similar products in the comfort of your home.

**Exercise Guidelines**

**Always Be Safe** – if you are exercising alone, make sure that a friend or family member knows where you are going and the time of your expected return. Always wear your medical identification bracelet if you have health problems such as allergies, diabetes or high blood pressure. Make sure that you have comfortable shoes that have good cushioning for your joints. Wear loose, comfortable clothing that will keep you cool in the summer and warm in the winter.

**Always Have Warm-Up & Cool-Down Periods** – these periods should last about 5 minutes before and after you exercise. You should do the same activity that you are planning to do for exercise, but at a slower rate.

**Start Slowly** – over a period of several months, you should be able to gradually increase both the intensity and duration of your exercise. Please see Sample Walking Program at the end of the Patient Guide.

**Avoid Exercises That Causes You Pain** – if you are experiencing pain, decrease the amount of time you are exercising or change to a different type of exercise. If the pain continues, please consult your family physician.

**Target 30 Minutes A Day** – when you first start exercising, you may not be able to do all 30 minutes at once. Try breaking your exercise into three 10 minute sessions then gradually increase your time until you can exercise 30 minutes at a time.

You may feel overwhelmed by the behavioral & lifestyle changes. Motivation is the first step toward change. Listed below are several additional ways to help you in the behavioral change process.

**Develop well defined and realistic visions.** Generate visions of how you wish to feel, look and what you hope to be able to do in one, three and five years from now. Refer to them when you face challenges along the way.

**Identify benefits and motivators.** Write them down as a reminder of your goals and keep this list handy. Always recognize the goals you have successfully accomplished and try to understand what will increase your likelihood of future success.

**Set small goals to fulfill your vision.** Goal setting is an important part of behavior change. Goals give direction, help monitor progress and make you accountable to yourself and perhaps to others. Document your successes and allow yourself the opportunity to build your confidence. This will give you encouragement and strength to continue toward your long-term vision.

**Make a commitment to yourself to change.** Share that promise with someone else that you can depend on for support.

**Reach out to family and friends for social support.** The larger the network that supports you the greater the likelihood of success.

**Replace behaviors.** Replace unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones. With the right environment and proper social support, you have the capacity to make healthier choices.

**Reward yourself!** When you reach any goal (no matter how small) celebrate your success with a reward such as a new piece of clothing, a good book, a visit with a friend, or a movie out.

**Do NOT berate yourself for setbacks.** Remind yourself of what is working so you can rebuild your confidence to continue
toward your goals and visions. You have the answers!

**Identify your strengths and employ them to overcome weaknesses.**

**Recognize obstacles that may interfere with success and formulate strategies to overcome your obstacles.** Avoid self-sabotage. Remain focused on your goals. Replace negative thoughts with positive ones. When we feel positive, we act positive which enables us to take the necessary action toward change.

It is important to note the impact of stress on behavior. Stress is a stimulant. Good stress keeps us energized, excited or motivated. Bad stress, known as distress, overwhelms us resulting in anxiety. It is crucial that you engage in activities or behavior change that help you channel stress so that you do not become anxious or bored. Meditation, exercise, positive self-talk, laughter, journaling, experiencing nature and getting fresh air are among examples that you may find beneficial. As you manage your weight loss behavioral goals, be mindful of your habits. Pay attention to how, what, when, where and how much you eat.

**Consider the following useful tips to aid your effort toward mindfulness:**

- Do not eat in front of the television or while reading.
- Pre-portion your food and put the package away.
- Keep tempting foods out of the house or at best, out of sight.
- Do not go to the grocery store hungry. Make a grocery list and know exactly what you need.
- Use smaller plates, bowls, glasses and cutlery.
- When you have achieved a goal treat yourself to something whimsical, unique or special to you.
- Always have healthy foods available. In an effort to prevent family members from consuming your foods consider having a cupboard dedicated solely to you.
- Focus on activities other than eating such as those that bring you pleasure, make you laugh or that energize or revitalize you.
- Brush your teeth after meals or if you feel the desire to eat.
- Do not eat standing at parties and do not stand at the food table at buffets.
- Offer to bring a healthy food item (or two) to a party or family function. It will ensure that you have something to enjoy and it will reduce the temptation to snack on unhealthy alternatives.
- Do not hesitate to specify special dietary requirements when dining out. Most restaurants are used to tailoring menus for people with special dietary needs. This will help family and friends embrace and support your need for change. You may find that your new habits become contagious and others will benefit from observing your new routine.

The factors that contribute to good physical and mental health are simple: get enough sleep and regular physical activity, eat regularly and healthy, avoid distress, smoking and other substance abuse. Practice positive self-talk and recognize your good qualities and successes daily. Focus on positive behavior change in order to feel better about yourself and to enjoy your road to a new healthy lifestyle. Always remember to treat yourself with patience and acknowledge that new behaviors bring new challenges.
## Sample Walking Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm Up</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Cool Down</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION A</td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 5 min.</td>
<td>15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION B</td>
<td>Repeat above pattern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION C</td>
<td>Repeat above pattern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continue with at least three walking sessions during each week of the program</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 7 min.</td>
<td>17 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 9 min.</td>
<td>19 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 11 min.</td>
<td>21 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 13 min.</td>
<td>23 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 6</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 15 min.</td>
<td>25 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 7</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 18 min.</td>
<td>28 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 8</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 20 min.</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 9</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 23 min.</td>
<td>33 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 10</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 26 min.</td>
<td>36 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 11</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 28 min.</td>
<td>38 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 12 &amp; Beyond</strong></td>
<td>Walk slowly 5 min.</td>
<td>Then walk briskly 30 min.</td>
<td>40 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>