

Cook Now, Enjoy Later

Why not take the post-surgery pressure off by stocking and preparing foods you know you can enjoy those first weeks? It'll save you anxiety—and maybe even money.

Strategic shopping and cooking ahead of time will take the post-surgery pressure off in the kitchen—because you know you have the foods you love and need on hand.

“Cooking ahead for the pureed and soft-foods stages can save you time and money, and ensures that you’ll have foods on hand that you really enjoy,” says Meredith Urban-Skuro, MS, RD, CDN, consulting dietitian for the cookbook *Eating Well After Weight Loss Surgery: Over 140 Delicious Low-Fat High-Protein Recipes to Enjoy in the Weeks, Months and Years After Surgery*. “And stocking up on liquid foods you’ll need early on will simplify your life after surgery.” Here’s how to get ready.

Stock Up for the Liquid Diet Phase

Get ready for the liquid phase of your post-surgery eating plan by stocking your cabinets and refrigerator with healthy liquids you like best. Good options include:

- Soups. Opt for broths, preferably reduced-sodium.
- Puddings, custards, and gelatins. Go for sugar-free varieties. (A dab of low-calorie whipped topping is OK.)
- Instant breakfast mixes such as Carnation Instant Breakfast. You’ll mix it with nonfat milk.
- Vegetable juices without pulp, such as tomato juice or V8.
- Nonfat milk and smooth yogurt (no fruit chunks or granola!).
- A low-sugar protein drink. “I recommend those that have at least 25 grams of protein and fewer than 6 grams of sugar per eight-ounce serving,” Urban-Skuro says. “You can find these drinks in stores like Walmart—they’re widely available. Taste-test various flavors and brands ahead of time so you know which ones you like best.”

Stock Up for the Pureed Phase

Many weight-loss centers recommend a week or so of pureed foods—those that require no chewing or melt into liquid in your mouth—before you transition to soft foods that require some chewing. In addition to liquids, also keep on hand:

- Low-fat or nonfat smooth yogurt and cottage cheese (mash with a fork)
- Applesauce (smooth, not chunky)
- Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, and grits
- Malt-O-Meal
- Baby food (smooth varieties, not chunky types)
- Eggs (you may be able to have soft scrambled eggs that have been mashed with a fork)

Make-Ahead Meals for the Soft-Foods Phase

If you love the taste and variety of homemade foods, Urban-Skuro recommends making healthy and hearty foods ahead of time. Her top picks: chili made with skinless ground turkey or chicken; beef stew; and soups made with lentils, black beans, or split peas if your doctor says it's okay to eat these high-fiber foods early on. You can also prepare soft, moist foods like meat loaf and meatballs in sauce ahead of time and freeze small portions.

“For chili, stews, and soups, make a big pot, then divide in half,” she says. “You can blenderize part of it and freeze in ice-cube trays. That way you’ll have perfect, mini-portions of pureed foods if you still need them. Freeze the rest in small containers or ice-cube trays without blenderizing, for the soft-foods stage.”

Be sure to consult with your doctor about your nutrition plan.

IMPORTANT LAP-BAND[®] SYSTEM SAFETY INFORMATION

Indications: The LAP-BAND[®] System is indicated for use in weight reduction for severely obese patients with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of at least 40 or a BMI of at least 35 with one or more severe comorbid conditions, or those who are 100 lbs. or more over their estimated ideal weight.

Contraindications: The LAP-BAND[®] System is not recommended for non-adult patients, patients with conditions that may make them poor surgical candidates or increase the risk of poor results (e.g., inflammatory or cardiopulmonary diseases, GI conditions, symptoms or family history of autoimmune disease, cirrhosis), who are unwilling or unable to comply with the required dietary restrictions, who have alcohol or drug addictions, or who currently are or may be pregnant.

Warnings: The LAP-BAND[®] System is a long-term implant. Explant and replacement surgery may be required. Patients who become pregnant or severely ill, or who require more extensive nutrition may require deflation of their bands.

Anti-inflammatory agents, such as aspirin, should be used with caution and may contribute to an increased risk of band erosion.

Adverse Events: Placement of the LAP-BAND[®] System is major surgery and, as with any surgery, death can occur. Possible complications include the risks associated with the medications and methods used during surgery, the risks associated with any surgical procedure, and the patient's ability to tolerate a foreign object implanted in the body.

Band slippage, erosion and deflation, reflux, obstruction of the stomach, dilation of the esophagus, infection, or nausea and vomiting may occur. Reoperation may be required.

Rapid weight loss may result in complications that may require additional surgery. Deflation of the band may alleviate excessively rapid weight loss or esophageal dilation.

Important: For full safety information please visit www.Lapband.com, talk with your doctor, or call Allergan Product Support at 1-800-624-4261.

CAUTION: Rx only.