

Stay on Track after Bariatric Surgery

Weight Loss Expectations after Bariatric Surgery

Weight lost after bariatric surgery varies from person to person. It can depend on a person's starting weight. The expected change at two years after surgery is a decrease of 20 to 30% of your clinic starting weight. For example, a person who weighed 300 lbs would expect to lose 60 to 90 lbs. *What would you expect to lose two years after surgery?*

_____ lbs (your starting weight) x .20 = _____ lbs (20% weight loss)

_____ lbs (your starting weight) x .30 = _____ lbs (30% weight loss)

Weight Plateaus and Weight Regain

When you lose weight, your body changes. Certain body hormones and chemicals may increase. These 'invisible changes' are your body's way of slowing down or stopping your weight loss. Your body does this to keep you healthy. You may regain 5 to 10 % of the weight you lost. This may happen two or more years after surgery. Of course, your lifestyle and habits can also affect your weight.

'Non-scale' Positive Changes – An important reminder!

Weight is just one measure of surgery success. Avoid focusing on the number on the scale. Celebrate the many positive changes that you have noticed! Use page 4 of this handout to keep an ongoing list of all of the things that are better with your health and in your life since surgery.

'Staying on Track' Lifestyle Behaviours Checklist

- Weight can fluctuate up or down by five pounds a day. Check and record your weight at least once a month, but not more than once a week. Take note of a steady weight increase or a regain over 10 pounds.
- Avoid weight checks if it makes you distressed. Focus on changes in your body size or the fit of your clothes.
- Review your lifestyle habits and behaviours using the **lifestyle behaviours checklist** on the next few pages. There are many things that can affect your weight.
- Ask yourself:

Which behaviours am I doing right now? Continue these behaviours.

Are there behaviours that I could work on? Set one or two goals to help you focus on these behaviours.

NUTRITION – I am . . .

- Eating at least three times a day.
- Eating no more than 1 ½ cups of food at one time.
- Choosing mostly solid foods for meals and snacks.
- Choosing water and low-calorie fluids for my beverages.
- Drinking at least 8 to 10 cups of low-calorie fluids a day.
- Having snacks to prevent overeating at mealtimes.
- Including a protein-rich food at my meals and snacks. Eating the protein food first.
- Choosing foods high in fibre.
- Eating vegetables at my lunch and dinner meals.
- Following the 4 P's – Plan, Purchase, Prepare and Pack my meals and snacks.
- Eating out two or fewer times a week.
- Carrying food with me when I'm away from home.
- Making a grocery list and sticking to it to avoid impulse food choices.
- Limiting snack foods high in sugar, fat or salt.
- Keeping high calorie, tempting foods out of my home.
- Avoiding alcohol.
- Avoiding carbonated beverages.

EATING BEHAVIOURS – I am . . .

- Eating mindfully and paying attention when eating with no distractions.
- Using small forks and knives and eating small bites of food.
- Chewing my food until it is smooth before swallowing – 'chew til it's goo'.
- Waiting to completely swallow a bite of food before putting more food in my mouth.
- Taking no longer than 30 minutes to eat a meal or snack.
- Paying attention to signals my body gives me. No longer eating when my stomach is comfortably satisfied. Waiting 2-3 hours to complete unfinished food or to eat a snack.
- Waiting 30 minutes after I eat before drinking any fluids.
- Using healthy distractions to help manage food cravings.
- Soothing myself in emotional situations or rewarding myself without food.
- Socializing with my friends and family without food some of the time.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY – I am . . .

- Sitting or lying down less.
- Moving my body and using my muscles in some way most days.
- Doing a physical activity that I enjoy.
- Reducing my screen time – TV, computer, phone.
- Setting physical activity goals for myself.

SELF-MONITORING – I am . . .

- Keeping a food record.
- Keeping track of my fluid intake.
- Meeting my daily protein goal.
- Tracking my daily steps.
- Keeping a list of my non-scale positive changes and accomplishments.
- Weighing myself regularly.
- Being honest with my record keeping.

MENTAL HEALTH – I am . . .

- Communicating effectively with my family, friends and others in my life.
- Using healthy strategies for managing my stress without food.
- Regularly practicing relaxation.
- Paying attention to my mood.
- Seeking help from my doctor or health care provider if I'm feeling down or anxious.
- Using positive-self talk.
- Feeling that I have enough emotional support from others.
- Getting a restful night's sleep.
- Able to focus on the tasks necessary for weight management.
- Making time for a healthy lifestyle and self-care.
- Including enjoyable activities in my life regularly.
- Comfortable with the changes in my body.
- Accepting the idea that I may be at my 'best weight'.

OTHER FREE HELPFUL INFORMATION – Search these titles

- Alberta Healthy Living Registered Dietitian – 403-9-HEALTH – *for nutrition counselling*
- American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery
- Obesity Canada (*Improving the lives of Canadians affected by obesity through anti-discrimination, prevention and treatment efforts*)
- Obesity Society (*A scientific membership organization dedicated to improving people's lives by advancing the science-based understanding of the causes, consequences, prevention and treatment of obesity*)
- Alberta Mental Health Helpline – 24/7 – 1-877-393-2642
- Alberta Addiction Helpline – 24/7 – 1-866-332-2322

