

Lifestyle changes after Bariatric Surgery Information Sheet



Think healthy lifestyle - don't think diet!

This Information Sheet outlines what to expect when going home following Bariatric Surgery.

The time has come. You've made the decision to take the diet books off the shelves, take stock of your life, and do something constructive for yourself.

Now that you've had weight loss surgery, the last thing you want is to be on an endless diet. You already know the truth about diets – they simply don't work in the long run.

Diet is a short term approach, but not a solution to improving body shape.

Agree? So throw out all your old diet ideas about good, bad, legal, and illegal foods, calorie counters and scales. Success in losing body fat and keeping it off is a plan for life – a healthy lifestyle plan that involves food, fun, activity, confidence... and the surgery.

So, get your taste buds ready for a new and challenging way to great health, a more comfortable life, and a happier body shape. Start your new lifestyle afresh with this low-fuss approach to food and long term success. You'll soon discover that this is not another diet book. It is a guide to great eating that lets you take full advantage of your surgery.



Firm up your commitment.

If you have ever fallen victim of lack of willpower, then this page is a must. To get into better shape and keep it, even with surgery, you need a commitment beyond just seeing the numbers on the scale drop. Commitment beats lack of willpower any day.

Write down every reason in the world why you want to succeed – the benefits you will gain. Add to the list whenever you want to. The reasons strengthen the commitment. Keep these benefits at the front of your mind and convince yourself of their worth.

Some common benefits and reasons for wanting to succeed include...

- Feel better generally
- Play more with Children
- Be able to move around easily
- Get into clothes
- Fit into chairs with comfort
- Improve blood pressure
- Be around when the Children grow up
- Have less weight to carry around
- Get my old personality back
- Have more energy
- Look better
- Get back into sport
- Help my heart
- Improve diabetes
- Feel in control
- Feel comfortable about sex

What could stop you?

- I get too hungry
- I eat when stressed or tense
- I eat when feeling low
- I eat what everyone else eats
- I have no help from Family or Friends
- I can't resist temptation
- I have no time to plan what I eat
- I hate exercise
- I eat throughout the day and night

Think about what stopped you in the past.

You can beat these barriers once you know what they are and conquer them one by one.



Eating is more than hunger

- Specific foods are part of life's celebrations – Christmas, Easter, Valentines Day, birthdays, marriage, Christenings. On these celebrations, particular types of food are usually brought out – the turkey, birthday cake, chocolates, and champagne.
- Food is used to fill life's voids – boredom, loneliness, unhappiness, lost romance.
- Some foods bring back memories – everyone has a childhood memory of treats or food to keep you quiet, calm you're crying, soothe your hurt, or make up for lost time together.
- Food and drinks are used to vent frustration, curb anger, heal a hurt, or protect from something... but more often they cause more guilt and anger, so the cycle continues.
- Food is used to punish. Either food is withheld or horrible food is given. Both starvation (through crazy diets) and gluttony are used for self-punishment.
- Food is just there, so without a second thought, you swallow. Have you ever finished a child's leftovers even though you'd already eaten? How often do you dip a tasting spoon into the cooking pot, just to check the flavours are ok? How often do you pick you are making meals? Now think about why you eat what you eat. Think about when you eat as well. You will need to do this for several days.

Once you discover why you eat, you will
Discover whether you eat for hidden reason
Other than genuine hunger.

**If you do, then your mind has to work
Overtime to change.**

The surgery only helps with true hunger!

Automatic pilot

Like a good wine, food is meant to be enjoyed, but for most of us, food and meals are a "rush job". How often have you eaten something and at the end thought... that wasn't very nice, I don't know why I ate it? Or even been distracted by TV or something else while eating and then be surprised to find the plate or packet already empty? That's automatic pilot.

The usual signal from the eyes, nose and taste buds which combine together to say enough is enough don't even get a look in when the auto-pilot is on.

To get the best results from the surgery, you" need to turn off your automatic pilot, and re-train your taste buds, your mouth and your mind appreciate food at its best.

With the band in place, eating on automatic pilot can be uncomfortable – reflux, indigestion, regurgitation, severe pain or even vomiting are often the result of eating too much or too quickly. Your automatic pilot also spells disaster if it's programmed to graze.

So how often do you start to re-train that pilot? The first step is to learn about why you eat what you eat. The second step is to re-discover food – not calories or fat content, but tastes and flavour.



Discover food flavour

Practice this discovery of food each day with something different. With the next mouthful of food you sample, take the time to describe the following:

- The texture – is it crunchy, smooth, dry or moist?
- The mouths feel – does it linger on the surface of your tongue or disappear cleanly away?
- The flavour – how sweet, salty, bitter, and which spices are present?
- Where in your mouth is the flavour most intense?

Different places on the tongue are sensitive to different tastes, so try and discover these spots on your tongue.

- The smell?
- How enjoyable really is that food and why?

Did you realise that after just five teaspoons of one food, the taste buds tire and the flavour is no longer as intense or pleasurable as the first mouthful?

3 Ingredients for success!

- 1) Buy good quality, great tasting healthy foods so you can savour and spoil your taste buds.
- 2) Plan to include favourite foods rather than battle them. Giving in after a battle often leads to disappointment, dismay, guilt or a binge.
- 3) Make your food worth eating – really enjoy delicious foods rather than waste your small capacity with liquid food and fast foods.

Smart ways to avoid vomiting, pain and indigestion

- Eat slowly
- Eat small
- Take your time
- Eat meals and snacks on time
- Chew really well
- Drink before your meal, not during or after

You do not have to suffer with vomiting pain and indigestion.

These can be avoided by being mouth-wise with food.

Quotes and tips from those who have travelled your path and suffered.....

“I rushed breakfast” Try not to rush your food because fast eating often means to much.

“Before I even knew it I’d swallowed” Pay attention to what and how much you eat. It is hard to judge sizes and amounts, especially on different plates and bowls.

“I wanted to join in the conversation, so I just swallowed – what a mistake” Make eating a pure event – distractions such as a TV and work mean you risk swallowing un-chewed food or you eat more than you realise. It’s automatic!

“The food looked so tempting and I really hate waste – I thought just one mouthful extra won’t hurt” Reduce the amount eaten at any one time – if you over-fill the new pouch, you risk stretching it so that it can hold more food. Only serve enough food to suit your needs.

“I gulped it down because I was so hungry – I missed lunch” Eat on time. If you miss a meal or snack, then hunger will drive you wild. You’ll probably grab something and rush it down. Chew really, really well, digestion starts in the mouth, and if you swallow without chewing then chunks of food will sit like a bath plug across the band/ or stretch small stomach and cause severe indigestion.

“It’s hard to break the habit of coffee after a meal – I have to remind myself” Keep drinks away from feeding times. Wait at least 30 minutes after food before you take a drink. If you don’t then you risk swishing the food through and therefore early hunger or stretching the new stomach to its limit.

“I didn’t feel full, so I had some more – I did pay for it after” Take your time – it takes at least 20 minutes before the gut signals to the brain to say its full and satisfied. In those 20 minutes, you can pack in far too much, and cause a problem.

Fun & Games - MORE THAN JUST FOOD

Ease away stress and tension, improve muscle and body tone, and manage your life with regular exercise. Research proves, without doubt, that body-fat loss lasts longer and is easier to achieve with exercise.

The best exercises for fat loss and your body's health are the slower paced, longer lasting types like walking, swimming, low impact aerobics, and dancing. Quick intense "drop till you stop" exercise doesn't offer the same long term benefits.

If you are not fit and have been exercising, aim for a realistic time goal – say 5-10 minutes every day. Aiming for a short amount of time is achievable. If you try to cram too much exercise in too early too often, you may set yourself up for failure. Once you feel ok with 10 minutes, you can choose to gradually increase the time to a non-stop 30-40 minutes or several 10 minutes sessions daily.

Write down all the active things you do or would like to try.

- Walking
- Aqua-aerobics
- Tennis
- Dancing
- Stair climbing
- Low impact aerobics
- Swimming
- Arm curls
- Line dancing
- Circuit training
- Leg-raises

Make activity part of your day. Choose a few activities and vary them. One week you might like to hire a walking machine and play with the Children. The next week might be swimming and ten pin bowling. Whatever you choose, plan to do it rather than hope you will slip it into your day. Now decide which days and what times would suit you best and lock in your exercise plan.

Use exercise to your advantage

Exercise is a great distracter. If you are out and about enjoying some exercise, then you are away from the "easy eats."

Exercise improves muscle condition which means you can choose to eat more food or lose weight more easily. It increases your metabolic rate – the rate at which you burn fuel and Calories. Regular exercise releases natural endorphins which give you a natural high – an instant reward. Exercise strengthens your heart and lungs.

Some is always better than none

Turn your Coffee break into an activity break – every extra minute of movement helps.

Everyday you can grab a little extra exercise. Park your car further away from your destination so you have to walk. Take the stairs instead of the lift. Jump off the bus a stop before so you can walk the rest of the way. Fidget instead of sitting still. Amazingly these little extras help.

"Doing regular planned activity is one measure of success"

Boost your metabolism

Every second of every day, whether you are sleeping or awake, your body is quickly burning fuel and using energy up. In fact, every breath, eye blink, heart beat, shrug, and random move that you make accounts for almost 70% of your body's energy (kilojoules or calories) needs. This is your metabolism, the faster your metabolism, the easier it is to keep in shape.

Athletes, men, children, and teenagers have faster metabolisms, as you age, your metabolism begins to slow and, if you do not boost it up, then the excess weight will creep on.

Did you realise that modern life has cheated your body? It's a proven fact that fidgets are more likely to be lean, so it makes sense that modern day conveniences that make life easier, actually rob you're your body of health. It's the little movements that really add up for your health and metabolism. Remote controls for the TV, stereo, and garage door sacrifice energy burning. Lifts, elevators and escalators save you walking and conserve your fat.

Do you email or pick up the phone rather than walking to another person's desk. Surfing the "net" has taken the physical out of surfing the waves. Electric openers and beaters, dishwashing machines and tumble dryers may mean you have more time to enjoy life, but unless you enjoy something physical then once again you've lost an opportunity to burn body fuel and fat.

Tips to boost your metabolism

Build more muscle. The more muscle you have, the faster your metabolism. Activity boosts you metabolism by building muscle.

Enjoy enough food. Cutting your kilojoules too low causes muscle and fat loss. Lost muscle means a slower metabolism. Quick weigh loss diets spell long term disaster by causing muscle loss.

Spread your food across three meals and snacks. To process food, your body has to burn fuel, so make it burn more by spreading your food across the day.

Stay cool in winter. Your body will have to work harder to keep you warm if you don't over-wrap yourself in warm clothes.

Food for success

It is now enough to fill up on just any food. You need to select carefully to maximise you intake of vitamins, minerals, trace elements and protective nutrients. Use the guide that follows to choose a wide variety of food to satisfy your taste buds and get top nutrition. It is not meant to be an endless list that restricts how much you eat. It is designed to help you eat enough – to make sure you don't under-cut your daily needs. Re-learn how much food your body needs.

Carbohydrates

NINE of your carbohydrates serves are needed for basic nutrition – 5 carbs from bread and cereal, 2 from fruit, and 2 from dairy.



Breads, Cereals, and Grains

Rich in insoluble fibre, thiamine, and complex carbohydrates, these foods help prevent constipation and fatigue. Wholemeal products give you more vitamins, minerals and fibre. They're great fillers and, alone are usually low in fat.

Enjoy wholemeal and wholegrain breads, cereals and grains for best nutrition. Toast may be better tolerated.

Crunch into low fat crackers such as riveta, rice cakes, cracker breads. The best cracker choice has less than 5g fat per 100g. Vary your breads to add interest. Try pocket breads, flat breads, sourdough, rye, fruit bread, baps, chapatti.

Experiment with different grains including rice, wheat, rye, oats, barley, millet, bulgar, buckwheat, couscous, and polenta. Start your day with rolled oats and ready-to-eat cereals. Buy the variety packs to add interest to your day.

For a snack, try a plain scone, light breakfast bar, or no oil popcorn. Add variety to breakfast with toasting muffins crumpets and canned spaghetti. Boost your intake at tea time with pasta and rice.

Vegetables

Vegetables are rich in potassium, soluble and folic acid. They also contain anti-oxidants which reduce damage from the body's everyday metabolic processes. Think of them as great snacks (micro-waved jacket potato's), fabulous salads and as a traditional main meal.

Tips

Choose a wide range of different coloured vegetables for the best nutrition. Select fresh vegetable in season for maximum flavour, or frozen vegetables for convenience.

Quench your thirst and add nutrition with vegetable juice.

Buy a new vegetable to try each time you shopping.

Top up your nutrient intake and fill hunger holes with at least 2-3 cups of vegetables every day.

More food: Fruit & Dairy

Fruits are rich in potassium, soluble fibre, carbohydrates and anti-oxidants such as vitamin C and beta-carotene.

The nutrients in fruits help heal damaged cells and tissues, improve immunity, help lower blood cholesterol levels and protect against heart disease. For more fill, munch into whole fresh fruits.

Tips

Tuck into fresh whole pieces of fruit for maximum taste and satisfaction.

Chew skins really well to avoid discomfort. Peel for gastric band patients

Open a can of unsweetened fruit for an easy dessert.

Ring pull tins make great snacks.

Be adventurous – try a new fruit every week.

Skip fruit juice and dried fruits – its take about 2-3 oranges or apples to make 1 glass of juice.

Save slithers of avocado for flavouring - they are one of the few high fat fruits.

Dried fruit swells in the gut and is easy to over-eat on, so take care.

Sugars, Jams, and sweet drinks

Although rich in carbohydrates, these foods often lack other essential vitamins and minerals. Use them to add flavour and interest to your eating plan.

Use sugary spreads such as jam, honey, marmalade and maple syrup in place of butter and margarine to keep the carbohydrates up and the fat down.

Kick out the liquid sugars such as soft drink, cordial, fruit juice, and sugar or honey in tea or coffee.

Tips

Switch to a low joule or "diet" sweet drinks for a flavour that won't slow down your success.

Dairy Products

Milk, yoghurt and cheese are important sources of calcium which is vital for bone strength, and nerve and muscle function. Two portions every day will be ample to meet your basic calcium needs. Put the brakes on your dairy intake.

1 Portion

- = 300ml low fat milk
- = 300 ml low fat soy drink (with added calcium)
- = 250ml high calcium milk
- = 200g low fat plain yoghurt or flavoured
- = 1 cup of home-made low fat custard
- = half cup commercial low fat custard
- = 2/3 cup rice pudding made on low fat milk
- = 100ml evaporated skimmed milk
- = 120g low fat dairy dessert

Tips

Choose reduced or low fat dairy products for success.
Check that your soy drink has added calcium and is low in fat.
Add a dollop of low fat yoghurt to your potato or soup for a sour cream taste.
Quench your thirst with water, not milk.

Fluids

More than half your body is water. There is a constant turn over of water in the body and to replace normal daily losses, the body needs at least 1 ½ to 2 litres each day. The more you weigh, the more you need.

Failure to drink enough of the right fluid may cause weakness, headache, fatigue, sunken eyes, cramps, irritability, darkened urine, confusion or constipation. Your mouth may even confuse thirst and hunger.

Fluid, as water, is a very important item in your eating plan. Other fluid choices include low joule cordial, low joule soft drink, plain soda water, and flavoured mineral water.

Tips

Drink to prevent thirst. If you are thirsty, your body is already too dry.

Drink water even if you are not thirsty.

Drink at least 6 glasses of water every day.

Don't use tea and coffee or alcohol as fluid replacers because they act as diuretics, virtually flushing water out of the body. Fizzy drinks may cause belching or indigestion. Everyone has different tolerance, so test your own body's reaction to low calorie fizzy drinks.

Liquid calories never fill the lap-band pouch, but they will delay or prevent fat and weight loss.

FACT

The more alcohol you drink, the harder it is to control your body fat. Solid drinking sessions cause dehydration and knock off brain and liver cells.

Try these tips to cut back on alcohol:

Dilute your spirits. Try water, soda water, mineral water.
Add soda or mineral water to wine to halve the alcohol.
Buy single bottles rather than casks or glasses so you can keep track of how much you've had.

Avoid shouts because the pressure is great to keep drinking.

Have a carafe of iced water on the table so you can refresh your own glass.

Skip the high fat nibbles that usually appear. Crisps, nuts, cheese, hot dogs, sausage rolls, and pies add fat to your body.

Check with your pharmacist to make sure it is safe to drink with the medications you take, and never drink and drive.

Protein

CHECK YOUR PROTEIN INTAKE

Most Australians eat far too much protein and therefore too much fat. Fat is hidden in even the leanest of protein sources. Your body only needs small amounts, so check your intake now.

Protein is found in many foods. Meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, and fish are not only excellent sources of protein, but also good sources of iron, zinc and essential amino acids. Iron is important for carrying oxygen in the blood. Both iron and zinc help strengthen the immune system.

Legumes are a great source of protein and carbohydrates, but they are poor sources of iron.

Nuts and cheese are protein rich, but poor iron. A lot of fat lurks in nuts and hard block cheese. Consider these as fat foods if you want to lose body fat.

Each serve of protein listed below contains roughly 15grams of pure protein. The balance is water, vitamins, minerals and some fat. These foods contain less than 10% fat.

PROTEIN

Choose the right amount. If you weigh less than 90kg, choose 2 from the list below each day. If you weigh more than 90kg, have a total of 3 each day. And that does not mean meat 2 to 3 times a day! Use the guide below.

1 Protein = 50 grams lean beef, pork, veal, chicken, fish, or seafood.

2 Eggs = 1 cup legumes (baked bean, soy beans, kidney beans, three bean mix)

TIPS

Tenderise meats by using marinades, slicing finely, cooking slowly in casseroles or serving as lean mince.

Ask your butcher for lean beef, trim lamb, new fashioned pork, and veal.

Add variety and new flavours with different lean proteins.

Pull excess fat from chicken and turkey before cooking.

Trim all fat meats before cooking.

Venture into lean game meats including venison, rabbit, emu, buffalo, kangaroo, and goat.

Whip up a quick evening meal with eggs in place of meat.

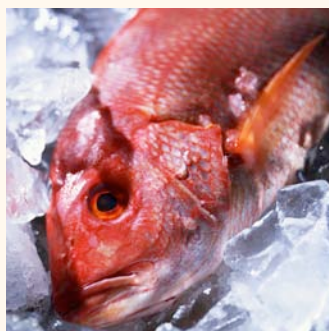
Include soy beans, lentils, kidney beans, and other beans more often.

Go for quality rather than quantity

For most people, these portions are extremely small, so check your plate carefully.

A rough guide to serving:

- 1 small chicken drumstick is 1 portion.
- ½ cup cooked lean mince is close to 3 portions.
- 5 large prawns is 1 portion.
- 12 raw oysters is 1 portion.
- Just enough this leg ham to cover a sandwich is 1 portion.
- A ring-pull can of baked beans is ½ a portion.



Fat

CUT THE FAT

Fats are found in many places. The obvious sources are butter, margarine, oil, salad dressing, cream and the fat on meat. The hidden sources are tucked in cakes, chocolates, fried foods, muesli bars, ice cream, pastries and pies.

All oils are pure fat. Most margarines and butters are more than $\frac{3}{4}$ fats!

Your body needs only a small amount of fat for good health – for hormones, essential fatty acids and to carry fat soluble vitamins. You can get most of your needs from lean meats, eggs, and wholegrain cereals without using extra fats.

Circle your personal daily fat target

Body Weight	Fat Target
Under 89kg	4
90kg or more	5

Do not include more than this number if you are really serious about losing weight.

Take care because fat sneaks in very easily, discover some common fat traps. You will see from the table that a very thin spread of butter or margarine on bread or a small amount of oil in the cooking is okay. Just don't go for fried foods like chips or fries, pies and pastries or heavy cakes and cream, and always excess fat from meats and pull off fatty chicken skin. The less fat eaten, the better your success will be.

Fact:

The latest research shows that fat in foods is the major culprit that puts fat on you. Fats are high in calories. Fat kilojoules are more likely to be stored as body fat on you. Slipping into fat will slow your weight loss, so cut the fat in food to get the fat off. Sink your teeth into nutrient rich carbohydrates because a diet in carbs can't be high in fat.

WARNING!

Nibble on just 10 macadamia nuts and you've demolished the equivalent of 4 potatoes.

Fat is a very concentrated kilojoules source. Just $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fat contains 3600 kilojoules or almost half your daily energy need!



Fat Traps (1 fat trap contains about 5 grams of fat.) **Your Personal Target =**

Food	Number of units of fat for the amount described	
Avocado	½ medium avocado	5
Biscuit – savoury snack	5 bite-sized crackers	1
Biscuit – choc, shortbread	1 small biscuit	1-2
Burger with the works	1 fast food burger	7
Butter or margarine	1 flat teaspoon	1
Camembert or brie	1 small wedge	1
Carrot cake	1/8 cake	3
Cheese	2 slices	2
Cheese – 90% fat free	2 slices	½
Cheese spread	1 tablespoon	2
Cheesecake	1 small slice	3
Chips	1 small portion	3-4
Chocolate	small 55g	3
Coconut cream	¼ cup	6-7
Corn chips	1 average 50g packet	3-4
Cream or sour cream	¼ cup	3
Crisps	1 average 50g packet	3-4
Croissant	1 unfilled	2-3
Ice cream	1 scoop	1
Ice cream – rich	1 scoop	2
Instant noodles	1 packet	3-4
Mayonnaise	1 flat tablespoon	2-3
Meat pie	1 average sized	5-6
Muffin	1 single muffin	2
Nuts	¼ cup mixed	4
Oil – salad or cooking	1 teaspoon	1
Olives, green	30 medium	1
Pastry – fill	4 sheets (no oil)	1
Vol-au-vents case	1 single case	2
Peanut butter	1 tablespoon	2
Pizza, cheese & meat	¼ medium pizza	6
Pizza, vegetables	¼ medium pizza	4
Popcorn	1 small bucket	6
Pretzels – plain	2 cups	1
Pretzels – flavoured	2 cups	2-3
Quiche	1 small slice	5-8
Salami	2 slices	4
Sausage grilled	1 thin	3
Sausage roll	1 large	6

Herbs, spices, flavours & condiments

Fresh herbs, garlic, and ginger naturally contain anti-oxidants, which help protect against heart disease. They also add back the flavour lost with cutting fat.

Ideas

Use herbs and spices to replace the flavour of fats and oils.

Try fresh and dried herbs, spices, pepper, dry mustard, curry powder, chutney, relishes and pickles.

Boost flavour with gravy powder, tomato puree and paste, dried tomato, vinegar, cranberry, apple and mint sauce, BBQ, soy sauce, and chilli sauce.

Add a dash of bitters, rose water or orange blossom water to soda water.

Flavour reduced fat milk with vanilla or other flavouring essences.

Choose commercial sauces less than 1g fat per 100g, or simply account for their fat load- for every 5g fat, count 1 fat trap.

Common questions

What if I get constipated?

Constipation should not be a problem if you follow the guide inside which, briefly, is... choose wholemeal and wholegrain breads, cereals, and grains, and eat whole fruit and vegetables. Drink at least 1.5 litres of water every day.

Enjoy regular exercise.

If you are still constipated, you may need medication prescribed by either your specialist nurse or doctor.

What about vitamin supplements?

Because the surgery limits how much food you can eat, it is essential to choose foods rich in nutrition and take nutrient supplements.

Even with good selections, your intake of essential nutrients may be lower than desired for good health. Ask your dietician for advice on which nutrients supplements you need.

More than likely they will include at least a multi-vitamin and mineral preparation.

What if I am hungry?

Work out what sort of hunger you have. If it is genuine hunger, then answer the following. Are you drinking with food or soon after food?

Are you going for easy to eat mashed, mushy, or stewed meals?

Can you swallow some foods without needing to chew?

Are you missing any meals?

Do you find some meals are delayed or missed?

If you answered YES to any, then try doing the opposite.

What if I can't do my exercise?

Turn to fun and games to discover that some activity is better than none. You do not have to pump iron or run a marathon to succeed. Everyone can find time and has the ability to do something active everyday. And remember, you will get a better long term result if you include some activity.

Can you guarantee success?

You are the only person who can guarantee personal success. The surgery is an aid. Your team will support you through both the fabulous and tough times. Think of yourself as a seasoned Olympic athlete- food is your event and you have a long history of dieting and eating. Olympic athletes are already fine performers but they really excel and achieve their goals with dedicated coaching, practice and focus. The coach will fine tune their program. Your support team will take you off your diet treadmill and move you to a more exciting and rewarding program which helps you achieve the results you want. You don't have to do this alone.

Work your BMI down

While there is no such thing as one best weight for height, there is a range linked with health prospects and risks – it's called "the body mass index" or BMI for short. The BMI gives you an indication of how overweight you are for your height. The BMI is generous. It takes into account your body frame and it works for adult males and females. The higher your BMI, the greater your risk of early death, and many personal, emotional physical and medical problems.

BMI RISK RANGE	Weight range for your height
Severe or dangerous risk	BMI 40 OR MORE
High risk	BMI 30 – 40
Moderate risk	BMI 25 – 30
Healthy	BMI 20 – 25

Aim to move your weight down to a lower BMI

In the beginning, aim for a weight that you would feel comfortable at. If it doesn't reach inside the healthy range, don't worry. Being lighter than you are now will improve your lifestyle and life. You can always change your final goal as you get used to your new body shape and start reaping the benefits.

Make your weight and fat loss last

During the fluid phases at the beginning, you lostkg. long term, it is not healthy you keep up this rapid weight loss – you lose muscle mass and your immune system will falter. Less muscle means a slower metabolism. A slow metabolism means a slower weight loss. For lasting success, aim for a steady weight loss and set step-wise, realistic goals. If you expect an unrealistic, fast rate of weight loss, you will be disappointed, even angry, when it doesn't happen.

Aim for the best loss of 2-4kg each month. After 6 months you will have lost up to another 24kg or 4 stone! The long term results really add up. Do remember that not all people are the same and you may not achieve the same weight loss as the person next to you.

Measure your success with more than just the scales.

Boost your ego and motivation by using more than the scales to measure your success. Jumping on the scales everyday is a sure-fire way to trigger disappointment and "breakouts". Regardless of what you eat, your weight can increase and decrease by more than 1kg (2lbs) in any one day – a disposable fluid change. Daily weight change is no gauge of fat loss or gain, which makes immediate weight change a poor measure of success. At the most, only weigh yourself once a month.

If your sole purpose is to see the magic numbers on the scales drop quickly, you're doomed. Weight loss, by itself, is not motivational enough for permanent success. The scales are a demon. When you run for the first line, you'll forget to make the lifestyle changes that give you more energy, a better quality of life, and lasting results. Once you've made "weight" you'll reverse the process. If the race is too long, you'll give up.

1: pursue a lifestyle that gives you more energy and pleasure, and the scale demon will look after itself. Use other measures of success such as eating smartly, following an activity plan, feeling good about how you've dealt with difficult situations, and body measurements.

2: on other days, record whether you are eating to plan and exercising to plan. Daily successes in these will help you lose weight and feel healthier in the long run.

3: have your BMI measured regularly

4: take your body measurements and check them each month. A toned body looks better and it's healthier, even though it may weigh more.

5: dive into your wardrobe and discover some old favourites that now fit. As your weight drops and body tone improves, the fit of your clothes will be a sure measure of success. Throw all formerly fat clothes away.

Record your personal achievements

As you lose weight, you'll begin to notice immediate benefits or little bonuses. Jot down the bonus benefits as soon as you notice them to boost your enthusiasm and your confidence of long term successes.

- Legs ache less
- Ankles and feet aren't sore
- Feel more confident
- Reflux is settling down
- Thighs rub less
- Shoes fit better
- Better sleep
- Easier to breath
- More compliments
- Snore less

Smart ways to avoid discomfort and to allow your brain to get in touch with your body's signals

Chew all foods well and appreciate them.

Start with a small, planned amount of food. Wait at least 20 minutes before you even think of having something else.

Eat slowly. Fast eating often equals over-fill.

Eat small. Reduce the volume eaten at any one time.

Take your time. If you rush your food, you may eat too much or fail to chew it well.

Plan your meals and snacks to avoid true hunger.

Eat meals and snacks on time. Hunger drives an uncontrolled appetite.

Aim to eat during set times only – time them to fit in with your lifestyle.

Chew really, really well. Large chunks of food may "sit" and cause discomfort, indigestion or even the need to vomit.

Drink before meals, not during or straight after.

Eat without distraction. Tension or excitement may make you eat too fast or forget to chew.

References:

Trudy Williams: The Pocket Gastric Band Guide: 1997
Paul O'Brian: 8 Golden Rules Of Weight Loss Surgery 2004
BOSPA: British Obesity Surgery Patients Association 2003

Amanda Pulford

Bariatric Specialist Nurse

