

After Bariatric Surgery: Full Fluids

Right after bariatric surgery your stomach is healing and swelling is going down. Your healthcare provider will tell you how long to take only full fluids. **Most people only need full fluids for 14 days after their surgery.**

The goal of full fluids is to:

- make sure you drink enough fluid to prevent dehydration
- make sure you get enough protein for wound healing, to feel full, and to limit the amount of muscle loss while you are losing weight
- avoid foods that might bother your stomach while it is healing
- limit the amount of fluid you drink at one time. Too much fluid at once can overflow the new stomach pouch causing discomfort, vomiting, and heartburn.

What is a full fluid?

A full fluid is any food or drink that:

- is liquid or melts at room temperature
- melts in your mouth, like Jell-O®
- can be poured, like water or milk
- has a pureed or baby food texture, like applesauce
- does not have solid pieces of food in it

What should I choose?

Below are full fluids you should choose.

- Hot cereals: thin oatmeal, oat bran, or Cream of Wheat®, infant cereal
- 100% pure fruit juice (limit to 125 mL (½ cup) per day)
- Applesauce or other pureed fruit, unsweetened
- Vegetable juice, low sodium
- Skim, 1% MF (Milk Fat), Lactaid® milk, or a low-fat soy fortified beverage
- Smooth yogurt or yogurt drink (no fruit pieces)

- Jell-O®, pudding or custard
- Soups, strained, blended, or broth
- Tofu (soy), soft or silken
- Popsicles made with artificial sweetener
- Decaffeinated coffee or tea or herbal tea
- Water or low-calorie beverages (Crystal Lite®, fruit-flavoured waters, diet iced tea, diet lemonade)
- Protein supplements or meal replacements only as recommended by your doctor or dietitian.

What should I avoid?

Only choose foods and drinks from *What should I choose?* While on full fluids, you should avoid:

- any solid or semi-solid foods
- carbonated drinks
- caffeine
- alcohol

How much should I drink?

Your pouch is much smaller than your stomach was before surgery. It is important to take small sips of fluid. Stop when you start to have a feeling of fullness, heaviness, or pressure in the pouch.

Sip fluids slowly from a cup or a glass. Don't use a straw or sports bottle-type lid because you may drink too fast or swallow air. This can cause discomfort.

Drink about ½ cup (125 mL) of full fluids every hour you are awake. Since you will take only small amounts, you must drink often throughout the day. This will help you get the fluids and nutrition you need.

Meeting your protein needs

Protein needs are different for everyone, depending on age, gender, and health. Ask your dietitian how much protein you need each day. Choose fluids that are **high in protein** like milk and milk products more often.

Protein and full fluids

Keep a journal to write down everything you eat and drink during the day. At the end of the day, add up how much fluid and protein you got. The table below lists how much protein is in different foods and drinks.

Tips:

- Do not overfill your pouch. Only drink to the point that you feel full. You may not be able to drink a ½ cup (125 mL) at a time.
- Use milk instead of water when making soup or hot cereal to increase the amount of protein.

Protein amounts in full fluids

Food and drinks are for ½ cup (125 mL) portions unless another amount is written.

Food	Food or Drink	Protein (grams)
Grain Products	• hot cereal, instant oatmeal, 1 packet	3
	• Cream of Wheat®	2
	• high protein cereal (Quaker Weight Control Instant Oatmeal®), 1 packet	7
Vegetables and Fruit	• juice, 100% pure vegetable or fruit	Less than 1
	• applesauce or other pureed fruit, unsweetened	0
Milk and Alternatives	• milk, skim or 1% MF or fortified soy beverage	5
	• yogurt (100 grams) or yogurt drinks, low-fat or fat-free	3–4
	• yogurt, Greek style, 0% MF (100 grams)	11
Other	• pudding or custard, made with low fat milk	4
	• soup made with added milk as per instructions	3
	• tofu (soy), soft or silken	6
Protein Supplements	• skim milk powder, 1 Tbsp	3
	• Beneprotein®, 1 scoop or 1 packet (7 grams)	6
	• Ensure High Protein®	6
	• Glucerna®	6

Note: The protein amounts in this table are averages. Find the exact amount of protein in packaged food or drinks on the Nutrition Facts table, or look at nutrition information from the manufacturer or restaurant.

MF = Milk Fat

Do I need more protein?

If you cannot meet your needs with regular full fluids, your doctor or dietitian will recommend a protein supplement that is right for you. **Only use a supplement if recommended.**

Supplements that provide a good source of protein (whey or soy) without too many calories or vitamins are the best choice.

- Mix protein powders like skim milk powder or Beneprotein® into food or drinks.
- High protein meal replacements like Glucerna® or Ensure High Protein® are a good source of protein but may be high in calories.

My daily protein goal

I need _____ grams of protein

My daily fluid goal

I need at least 8 cups (2 litres) of fluid each day.
