



# Post WLS Diet

## Stages 4 & 5

**Medical Disclaimer:** The information provided on this handout is intended for patients enrolled in the NSHA Bariatric Surgery Program. The information should ONLY be used in consultation with the NSHA Bariatric Surgery team.



# **Post-Surgery Follow-Up Appointments**

Please be prepared for your post-surgery appointments with the WLS Team by completing the following:

1. Complete blood work approximately 10 days BEFORE your follow-up appointment.
2. Have your binder and food journal, including your daily protein and fluid intake.
3. Know your current weight.
4. Have a list of questions that you would like answered by the WLS Team.

# Important Tips and Eating Guidelines for Stages 4-5

## Eat slowly

It is essential that you take your time when you are eating to prevent nausea and vomiting. Use the guideline of 10 minutes per ounce of food and time yourself with a kitchen timer. Eventually your meals should take 20 - 30 minutes to consume.

## Do not drink and eat at the same time

Avoid fluids during meals, and 30 minutes before and after eating, so that you do not feel excessively full. Excessive fullness can lead to vomiting and stretching of your new stomach pouch. Between meals, focus on low-calorie, sugar-free, non-carbonated, and caffeine-free fluids to keep you well hydrated. You need at least 8 cups of fluid every day.

## Stop eating when full

Your new stomach is much smaller than your old one. This will cause you to feel full more quickly. If you are not able to finish your meal, you can always set your food aside and finish it 1-2 hours later. Use the following hunger scale as a guide to evaluate your degree of hunger and fullness. This scale will be helpful in distinguishing between true hunger and eating for other reasons like stress or boredom.

	Hunger Scale
1	"Starving", weak dizzy
2	Extremely hungry, cranky, low energy, lots of stomach growling
3	Fairly hungry, stomach growling a little
4	Starting to feel a little hungry
5	Satisfied, neither hungry nor full
6	A little full, pleasantly full
7	A little uncomfortable
8	Feeling "stuffed"
9	Extremely uncomfortable, stomach hurts
10	So full you feel sick

## Use small plates and utensils

Try using cocktail or baby fork and spoons to assist you in portion control and taking small bites. Use a salad or dessert plate rather than a dinner plate.

## Plan ahead and make every bite count

Do not wait until it is time to eat to decide what you are going to have. Meal planning will help to ensure that you are prepared for your meals and that you are making the best choice to promote weight loss, good health, and recovery from surgery.

### **Avoid distractions during meals**

It is important that you consciously focus on the meal period to foster a healthy relationship with food. Eating at the dinner table is highly encouraged to allow you to be mindful of what and how much you are eating, and to promote optimal digestion. Savour every bite and appreciate the colour, flavour, and texture of the food. Too many distractions during mealtime such as your phone, computer, or television, can result in overeating.

### **Use low-fat cooking methods**

This can include baking, broiling, grilling, steaming, or poaching. You can also try air-frying.

### **Keep foods moist**

This makes swallowing and digestion easier. Marinating can provide more moisture with cooking meat and poultry. If you feel that a piece of food is stuck, often described as a pressure/discomfort in your chest, walk around and avoid drinking fluids to “wash it down” because the water generally comes right back up.

### **Use small, individual food storage containers**

Use GladWare®, Ziplock®, Tupperware®, or Anchor® storage containers to help portion your meals and simplify cooking. Try using ice cube trays for storing homemade pureed food (1 section holds 1 oz).

### **Temperature control**

Some people are sensitive to very hot or cold liquids. Warming cold foods with your mouth before swallowing or drinking room temperature liquids may be helpful. Also, be cautious when re-introducing gassy or spicy foods.

### **Read labels**

Use these general rules:

- Low sugar equals 8 grams or less of sugar per 100 calories
- Fruit and dairy have natural sugar so 15 grams of sugar preserving is ok for these foods
- Low fat equals 3 grams or less of fat per 100 calories

### **Vitamins and minerals**

One month after surgery, you can progress from your chewable vitamin and mineral supplements to a daily adult complete supplement. You will need to take this daily supplement **for the rest of your life**. The WLS Team may recommend other supplements based on your blood work, so please have this completed prior to your post-surgery appointments.

## Stage 4: Soft Foods

After following Stage 3 Diet for four weeks, you will progress to Stage 4 Diet. This consists of soft (mashed and ground) foods that are similar in texture to mashed carrots and ground turkey. The goal of Stage 4 Diet is to promote continued weight loss, health eating habits, and provide proper nutrient balance with high quality protein, carbohydrates, and fats. The WLS Team will review this stage of the diet with you at your 1 month follow-up appointment. To prevent any post-surgery complications, it is very important that you **do not self-advance yourself** to Stage 4. Remember, your new stomach is healing and needs adequate time to adjust to each stage of the program diet.

**Start:** 4 weeks after surgery

**Duration:** 4 weeks

**Meal Schedule:** 4 - 6 small meals/snacks per day

**Texture:** mashed and ground

**Calories:** 700 to 1000 calories per day

**Goals:** Facilitate normal, healthy eating habits and increase variety of flavors, colors, and texture. Provide more nutrient balance with high quality protein, some carbohydrates, and healthy fat.

### Build Your Meals

As you begin to incorporate a wider variety of foods into your diet, the concept of building your meals becomes extremely important. The food guide below has been developed to help guide you in building healthy, well-balanced meals to ensure that you are eating for optimal weight loss, health, and recovery. You will notice that all the food groups shown below are not the same size and that the size of the food group decreases as you move from the base up. This demonstrates the amount of a particular food group that you will be including in your meals in comparison to the others.

#### Protein

Similar to a house, your meals need a solid foundation. High protein foods, “Meat & Alternatives” and “Dairy” form the base of the food guide as they continue to be the foundation of your diet. When planning your meals, you should **always** begin with a protein source. You should continue building your meals one step at a time from the base up by adding in foods from other food groups.

#### Fruit and Vegetables

Your next step after selecting a high-quality protein source is to add a vegetable or fruit choice to your meal. You will notice that the “Fruit” group is smaller than the “Vegetables” group. This is because vegetables should be chosen more often than fruit.

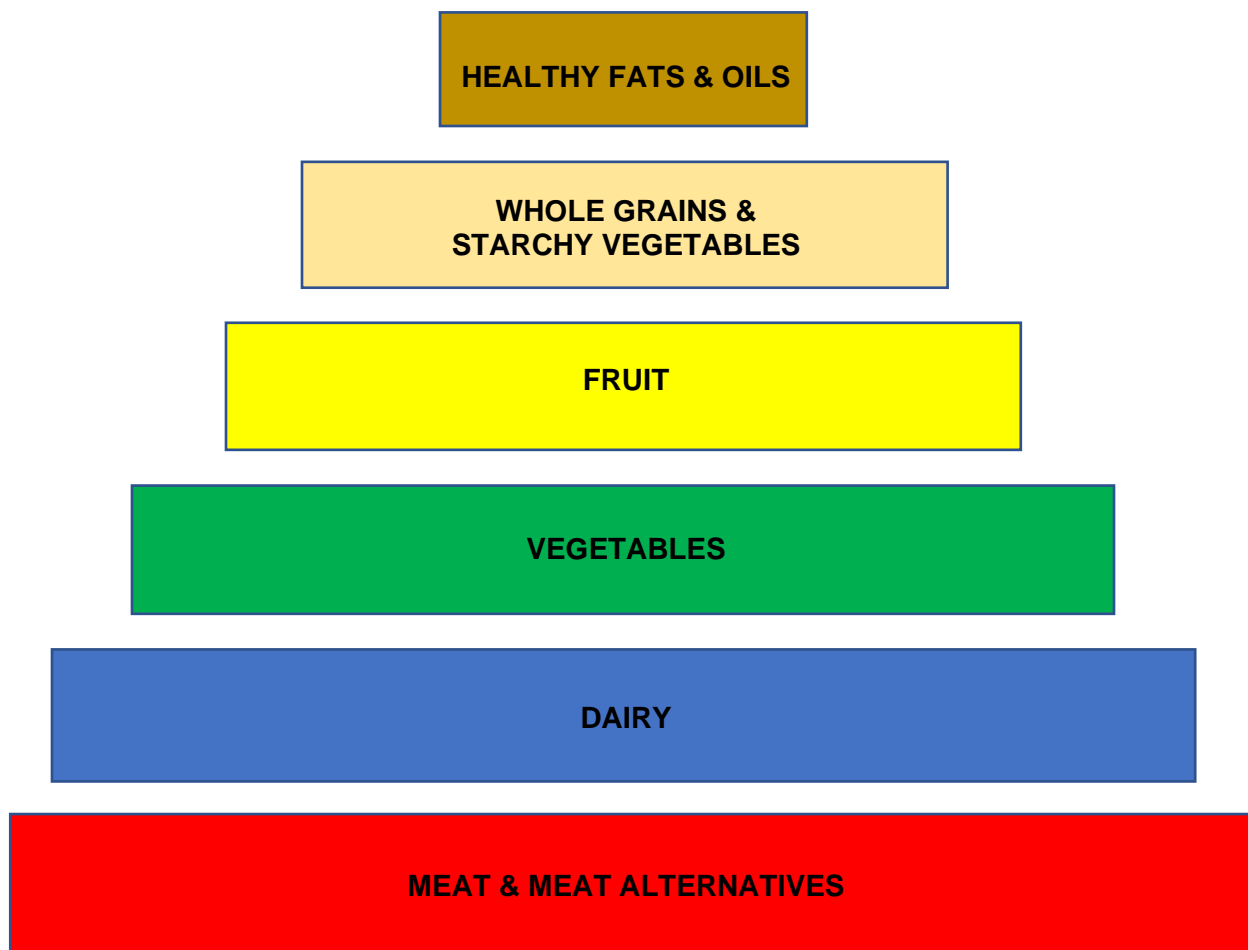
### **Whole Grain & Starchy Vegetables**

Only after you have incorporated either a vegetable or fruit choice in your meal should you have a “Whole Grain & Starchy Vegetables” choice. These foods are known to get people into trouble as portion sizes are often too large and choices from this group often include bread, rice, pasta, and potatoes which slow weight loss and result in potential weight gain. By building your meal from the base up, it will help you to control portion sizes as you will find that you will not have much room left for choices from this group.

### **Healthy Fats & Oils**

As shown below, “Healthy Fats & Oils” are included at the top of the food guide. It is important to incorporate small amounts of healthy fats in your diet.

## **WLS Food Guide Pyramid**



## MEAT & MEAT ALTERNATIVES

**Portion:** 1 oz to 2 oz per meal (1 oz or ¼ cup = 7 grams of protein)

**Texture:** Shredded, ground, lean, moist, tender

Always, always, always eat protein first at every meal and snack. Protein promotes weight loss and helps to prevent hunger. Our bodies do not store protein like fat and carbohydrates; therefore, you **MUST** ensure you get enough every day.

Start out with 1oz of high protein food and gradually increase to 2 oz per meal. It is a good idea to measure your portions using a food scale (most accurate) or measuring cups (¼ cup = approximately 1 oz). To keep track of your protein intake, remember 1 oz = approximately 7 grams of protein. You most likely will need to continue with 1-2 protein supplements a day to achieve your nutrition goals.

“Meat and Alternatives” are a good source of high-quality protein and other important nutrients including iron, zinc, magnesium, and B vitamins. Meat & Alternatives and/or dairy products should be consumed first as they are the foundation of your meal. An emphasis should be placed on low fat choices. Examples of high-quality sources of protein from the “Meat & Alternatives” group are shown below.

Source	Examples
Poultry	chicken - chicken salad, ground chicken turkey - turkey salad, ground turkey
Lean Meat	lean pork - ham salad, shaved lean deli meat lean ground beef - meatloaf, meatballs
Fish	flaky cod, haddock, salmon, and canned fish as tuna, salmon and sardines
Seafood	scallops - baked or seared crab meat initially avoid lobster or shrimp due to the tough and rubbery consistency
Egg	whole eggs/egg whites/egg substitutes - scrambled, poached, or egg salad
Soy	soy meatballs tofu diced veggie burgers
Legumes	chickpeas (hummus), kidney beans, lentils

## DAIRY

**Portion:** 1 cup milk (8 grams of protein), ½ cup cottage cheese (15 grams of protein), ½ cup of yogurt (5 - 8 grams of protein), 1 oz cheese (7 grams of protein)

Dairy products are full of bone building nutrients that help to keep your bones strong. They are also a good source of protein which will help you to meet your daily protein needs. A focus should be placed on low fat dairy products (less than 2 % milk fat). Examples of high quality and nutritious choices from the Dairy food group are shown below.

Source	Examples
Dairy	skim or 1% milk sow-fat yogurt - <100 calories per serving low-fat cottage cheese thinly sliced low-fat cheese



## VEGETABLES

**Portion:** Start with 1 to 2 tbsp. Build up to ¼ to ½ cup

**Texture:** Soft or mashed

Vegetables supply us with fiber and important vitamins and minerals. An emphasis should be placed on bright, colourful vegetables that are packed full of nutrients such as orange (carrots) and dark green (broccoli) vegetables. You will notice that starchy vegetables such as corn, peas, and potatoes are not listed here. They are listed under the “Whole Grains and Starchy Vegetables” group.

There is a misconception that frozen and canned vegetables are less nutritious than fresh ones. Not only are they just as nutritious, but they can often be a great cost saver when fresh vegetables are out-of-season. A great cost-saving strategy is to purchase fresh vegetables when they are in-season and opt for frozen or canned choices during out-of-season months. When purchasing either frozen or canned vegetables, it is important to read the labels and avoid choices that have added sauces which can add unwanted calories. Because most canned vegetables are higher in salt, people with high blood pressure should opt for fresh or frozen.

Vegetables should be well cooked and peeled and large or hard seeds and tough stalks should be removed. Initially, you may find that vegetables cause gas, bloating and abdominal discomfort. If you are finding that this is a problem, “Beano ®” (sold in supermarkets/drugstores) can be used to help with the discomfort. Avoiding large volumes at one time will also help. Examples of vegetable choices are shown below.

Source	Examples
Soft-cooked vegetables	asparagus tips, yellow and green beans, beets, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, spinach, onions, mushrooms, peppers, zucchini, canned tomatoes
Fresh, finely chopped vegetables	celery, mushrooms, onions - to flavor tuna or crab salad

## FRUIT

**Portion:** Start with 1 to 2 tbsp. Build up to ¼ to ½ cup

**Texture:** Soft, tender, and very ripe

Fruit will also help to supply you with fiber and important vitamins and minerals. Fresh, frozen, or canned fruit (without added sugar) may be consumed in small amounts. Focus on bright, colourful fruits as they are packed full of nutrition. If the skin of the fruit is tough (apples, pears, plums), you should peel it before eating. You should also remove any large, hard seeds.

Fruit juice should be kept to a minimum as it doesn't contain as much fibre as whole fruit and is a concentrated source of sugar. Remember, a serving of juice is **ONLY** a half a cup! Examples of fruit choices are shown below.

Source	Examples
Fruit	apples, unsweetened apple sauce, apricots, bananas, cantaloupes, nectarines, peaches, pears, kiwis, strawberries, watermelons  * <b>Note</b> - canned fruits must be packed in their own juice and fruit juices must be 100% fruit juice with no added sugar

## WHOLE GRAINS & STARCHY VEGETABLES

**Portion:** Start with 1 to 2 tbsp of cereals or vegetables and build to ¼ to ½ cup; 2 to 3 crackers

**Texture:** Soft

Grain products, particularly whole grains, are an excellent source of fibre and are full of many vitamins and minerals which are important for optimal health. Include small amounts of whole grains with your meals. Focus on choices that have at least 2 grams of fibre in them.

Avoid bread, pasta, rice, and potatoes as they have a tendency of slowing weight loss and may lead to weight gain. These foods also expand in your stomach once consumed and may cause you to vomit. Remember, the small size of your stomach requires that you make every bite count! Grazing frequently on any foods from this category may slow your weight loss progress or result in weight gain.

Source	Examples
Whole Grains and Cereals	unsweetened hot cereal - oatmeal, cream of wheat cold cereal (< 10 grams of sugar) softened with milk or yogurt low fat crackers - wheat thins
Starchy Vegetables	soft-cooked yams, squash, green peas wait until Stage 5 to introduce corn  * <b>Remember</b> - No bread, pasta, rice, or potato

## HEALTHY FATS & OILS

**Portion:** 2 to 3 tsp daily (1 tsp = 1 serving)

Our bodies also require a small amount of fat in our diets for optimal health. However, not all fat is created equally. Including 1 to 3 tsp of healthy fats per day, found in vegetable oils and fatty fish, will help to ensure that you are meeting your fat requirements.

Saturated fats (mostly from animal sources) and trans fats (created through processing & hydrogenation) should both be limited as they are known to increase our bad cholesterol (LDL cholesterol). Examples of healthy sources of fats and oils are shown below.

Source	Examples
Fish	fresh, canned, and unbattered fatty fish - salmon, sardines, mackerel, trout
Plant Oils	canola oil, olive oil, sunflower oil, peanut oil
Tub Margarine (0 grams trans-fat)	soft non-hydrogenated margarines made with vegetable oils - Becel
Mayonnaise	light mayonnaise - Hellman's, Kraft, PC
Salad Dressing	light, non-creamy – Italian, Greek, Oil & Vinegar

# Post-WLS Stage 4 Sample Diets

Remember, you still need the following **every day**:

- 4-6 small feedings (soft or mashed plus liquids)
- 8 cups (64 oz or 2L) or more fluids
- 60 -80 grams protein
- Adult complete multivitamin-mineral supplement
- 700 – 1000 calories
- 30-60 minutes of exercise every day

The following menus have 60 -70 grams protein in 700 – 1000 calories. You will want to ***slowly*** introduce these soft solids

Drink an additional 5 cups of water to meet your fluid requirement and remember to take you multivitamin and mineral supplement!

## Example 1

Breakfast	1 scrambled egg (use a bit of milk to scramble)
Snack	½ cup low fat, low sugar yogurt
Lunch	¼ cup tuna mashed with 1-2 tsp of low-fat mayonnaise and spread on 2-3 plain soda crackers
Snack	1 cup (8 oz) <i>HiPro Boost</i> , <i>Ensure</i> , or <i>Carnation Breakfast Anytime</i> , or homemade blender drink with protein powder
Supper	1 cup of well-cooked/soft hearty soup with at least 11 grams protein (one & a half oz chicken or meat added) or fish chowder, made with 1% milk
Snack	1 cup milk (skim or 1%) with protein powder added (add protein powder for an extra 8 to 12 grams protein)

## Example 2

Breakfast	small, low fat cheese omelet (1 egg or ¼ cup egg substitute + 1 oz low fat cheese) cooked in 1 tsp oil
Snack	8oz protein supplement (14-25 grams protein per serving)
Lunch	1-2 oz of tuna salad + 2-4 crackers (tuna made with minced celery + 2 tsp of light mayo)
Snack	6-8 oz low fat, light yogurt
Supper	1-2 oz diced baked chicken breast + 2-4 Tbsp mashed carrot (1 tsp margarine)
Snack	1 cup milk (skim or 1%)

## Example 3

Breakfast	½ cup high protein oatmeal (½ scoop protein powder)
Snack	½ small ripe banana
Lunch	egg salad (1 egg or egg substitute and 2 tsp of light mayo) + 2-4 crackers
Snack	½ cup low fat cottage cheese
Supper	2 oz of soft-cooked fish, 2-4 tbsp soft-cooked vegetable (1 tsp margarine)
Snack	8oz protein supplement such as High Pro Boost or homemade protein smoothie

# Summary of Stage 4 Goals

It cannot be emphasized enough how important these goals are to your overall health and recovery after surgery. Ensure that you have a plan in place to help you consistently achieve these goals on a daily basis!

## Stay Hydrated

- Drink 2 to 4 L (64 to 128 oz fl = 8 to 16 cups) of fluids per day
- Generally, women aim for 2-3 litres (64-96oz) and men 3-4 litres (96-128oz) per day
- Watch for signs of dehydration including headache, dry mouth, low urine output (less than 4 x per day and/or only in a small quantity), dark coloured urine and/or strong urine odour
- Normal urine color is usually darker in the morning and gets lighter as the day goes on
- Your multivitamin may darken the colour of your urine
- Avoid caffeine as it may irritate your new stomach wall
- Drink fluids between meals. Don't drink fluids 30 minutes before or after meals
- REMEMBER - "Catch up" with fluids is almost impossible after surgery

## Preserve Lean Body Mass with Protein

- Aim for 60 to 80 grams of protein daily by consuming foods with high quality protein
- Texture should be shredded, ground, lean and moist (e.g., chicken salad, scrambled eggs)
- Use Boost, Ensure and/or whey protein powder for additional protein
- Always eat protein food first, then incorporate other foods
- Goal is to promote fat loss, not muscle loss! Protein helps to preserve your muscle mass

## Nutrition and Calories

- Aim for 700 to 1000 calories daily
- Eat 4 to 6 small meals/snacks per day to ensure you meet your protein needs
- Include 2 to 3 tsp of healthy fats daily
- Limit serving of carbohydrates to ¼ to ½ cup of soft-cooked vegetables or fruit or ½ cup cereal or 2 to 3 crackers per meal.
- No bread, rice, or pasta as it can lead to vomiting and may slow weight loss
- Use small plates and utensils for portion control

## Other Important Considerations

- Eat slowly, chew foods thoroughly and avoid mealtime distractions
- Take a multivitamin and mineral supplement daily
- Review shopping guide on page 15 to help you plan ahead
- Engage in 30 - 60 minutes of daily physical activity to support weight loss and maintain lean body mass
- Keep a daily journal and be sure to track fluid and protein intake, as well as exercise, because we will be asking you these numbers at every follow-up appointment.

## Stage 5: Regular Foods

**Start:** 8 weeks after surgery

**Duration:** lifetime

**Meal Schedule:** 3 small meals and 1 to 3 snacks per day

**Texture:** regular consistency

**Calories:** females 800-1222 calories/day; males 1000-1600 calories/day

**Goals:** promote normal, healthy eating habits and provide proper nutrient balance as you continue to achieve and maintain a healthier weight. Protein, fluids, and your multivitamin and mineral supplement continue to remain a priority

Stage 5 is a lifetime commitment and requires the adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviours that will support weight loss and long-term weight maintenance. A recipe for success includes regular physical activity, in addition to wise food choices that focus on nutrient dense foods to ensure that you are achieving your nutritional goals.

In Stage 5, you will continue to use the food guide outlined in Stage 4; however, foods no longer have to be soft or ground. For example, you can now include raw vegetables. It is important that you progress slowly to build a tolerance to regular foods. It is also important to remember that protein remains the foundation of your meals and should always be eaten first. You are encouraged to slowly incorporate a wider variety of foods from the other food groups. However, remember to build your meals from the base of the food guide up. This means that Whole Grains & Starchy Vegetables should **ONLY** be added into your meals **AFTER** you have incorporated Vegetables and/or Fruit.

Although your protein and fluid requirements remain the same as Stage 4, your calorie intake increases slightly in Stage 5. In Stage 5, women should aim for 800 - 1200 calories, while men should aim for 1000 - 1600 calories. This can be achieved by following the food guide and slowly increasing your portion sizes as tolerated.

### Start Slowly

- Try only one new food at a time, at home. You may find that you tolerate a particular food one day and not the next.
- You can go back to the previous stage at any time if you are having difficulty digesting Stage 5
- Your tolerance to food will improve over time.

### Avoid Old Habits

Remember, Stage 5 is for life. It is most important to avoid falling back into your old eating habits and lifestyle that existed prior to surgery such as:

- Frequent snacking and grazing (pretzels, chips, crackers)
- Unhealthy food selections such as foods high in sugar, white flour and saturated/trans fats
- Skipping meals, eating late at night, eating too fast
- Not allowing time to exercise or enjoy other activities



# Summary of Stage 5 Goals

## Stay Hydrated

- Drink 2 to 4 L (64 to 128 oz fluid = 8 to 16 cups)
- Generally, women aim for 2-3 litres (64-96oz) and men 3-4 litres (96-128oz) per day
- Continue to watch for signs of dehydration (see page 11)
- Avoid caffeine as it may irritate your new stomach wall
- Drink fluids between meals. Do not drink fluids 30 minutes before and after meals
- REMEMBER - "Catch up" with fluids is almost impossible after surgery

## Preserve Lean Body Mass with Protein

- Protein still remains a priority. Aim for 60 to 80 grams of protein daily by consuming foods with high quality protein such as meat, poultry, fish/seafood, dairy and soy
- Use Boost, Ensure and/or whey protein powder to ensure you meet your protein needs
- Always eat protein food first, then incorporate other foods

## Nutrition and Calories

- Women should aim for 800 to 1200 calories every day, while men should aim for 1000 to 1600 calories.
- Calorie needs will vary on an individual basis (e.g., daily activity level)
- Aim for 3 small meals and 1 to 3 snacks per day to ensure you meet your protein needs
- In addition to high quality protein sources, include fruit and fresh or cooked vegetables, as well as small amounts of complex carbohydrates (e.g., whole grain cereals)
- Include 2 to 3 tsp of healthy fats daily
- Continue to use small plates and utensils for portion control

## Other Important Considerations

- Eat slowly, chew foods thoroughly and avoid mealtime distractions
- If you are having difficulty tolerating foods in Stage 5, you may temporarily return to Stage 4 until your tolerance improves
- Remember to take your multivitamin and mineral supplement daily for the rest of your life
- Engage in daily physical activity to support healthy weight loss and maintain lean body mass
- Continue to keep a daily journal and be sure to track fluid and protein intake to ensure that you are consistently meeting your needs

# Stage 4 & 5 Shopping List Ideas

Plan ahead for meals and avoid frequent grazing and snacking as it can lead to weight gain. See Stage 4 and Stage 5 sample menus for meal ideas.

## **MEAT/POULTRY/FISH** (lean, moist, tender)

- Meat: Lean ground or extra-lean ground beef, poultry, lamb, and pork
- Deli Meats: Lean, shaved, or thin sliced chicken, roast
- beef, ham (look at the food label to select lower fat and lower sodium options)
- Poultry (skinless): Chicken, turkey
- Fish: Fresh or frozen (non-breaded), canned fish packed in water (sardines, tuna, and salmon)
- Shellfish: Scallops, crab, clams, oysters, lobster

## **MEAT ALTERNATIVES**

- Legumes: Lentils, green pea, yellow pea, navy beans
- Soy: Soy meatballs, tofu, diced veggie burgers
- Egg: Whole eggs, egg whites, or egg substitutes

## **DAIRY** (low fat and low sugar)

- Milk: Skim or 1%
- Low Fat Cheese: Less than 20% Milk Fat (MF)
- Cottage Cheese: Skim, 1% or 2% Milk Fat
- Yogurt: Skim, 1% or 2% Milk Fat

## **VEGETABLES** (fresh or frozen)

- Asparagus tips, yellow and green beans, beets,
- broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, spinach, onions,
- mushrooms, peppers, zucchini, canned tomatoes

## **FRUIT**

- Soft Fresh Fruit: Banana, mango, peach, and pear (Stage 5 includes all fresh fruit)
- Canned Fruit (no sugar added or packed in its own juice): Applesauce, peaches

**GRAINS/CEREAL** (low fat and sugar)

- Starchy Vegetables: Squash, sweet potato, corn, peas, turnip
- Hot Cereal (unsweetened): Quaker Weight Control, Cream of Wheat
- Cold Cereal (at least 2 grams of fibre and < 10 grams sugar): Fibre One, Kashi, All Bran, Shredded Wheat
- Reduced fat crackers (at least 2 grams of fibre): Wheat Thins, Ritz, Saltines, Rice cakes

**HEALTHY FAT** (unsaturated)

- Plant Oils: Olive Oil, Canola Oil, Peanut Oil
- Salad Dressing (non-creamy): Italian, oil and vinegar, Greek
- Tub Margarine (soft non-hydrogenated margarines made with vegetable oils): Becel, Country Crock
- Light Mayonnaise: Hellmann's, Miracle Whip

**COMBINATION FOODS**

- Soups: Homemade or commercial brands (Healthy Choice Soups, Campbell's Healthy Request Soups or PC Blue Label)
- Use Nutrition Label to choose lower sodium options and avoid soups with potatoes, rice, or pasta

**DESSERTS** (low fat and sugar)

- Sugar Free Fudgesicles and Ice Pops
- Sugar Free Jell-O Gelatin and Pudding Mix
- Cool Whip (non-dairy cream topping) – maximum 2 Tbsp

**SPICES**

- May use a variety of minced fresh or dried spices, herbs, and condiments (low sugar, low fat)

# Healthy Tips for Eating Out after WLS

Eating out should be a pleasurable experience. After WLS, there can be some anxiety when eating at a restaurant. By using the following tips, eating out can be fun and enjoyable.

- If possible, call ahead or check online for a menu. This way you can know if they serve foods that fit the diet stage that you are on
- First try the foods at home that you want to order from the menu. This way you will know if you can tolerate them
- Know the location of the restrooms when you arrive, in case the foods/beverages you have make you ill
- Order your meal from the appetizer menu which are often smaller portions
- Request portions be made smaller, or order kids portions of adult foods
- Ask for a take-home box right when your food arrives. Leave out only what you plan to eat and package the rest to take home
- Ask for special requests, such as dressings and gravies served on the side
- Don't hesitate to ask the server questions. Ask how the meals are prepared and opt for meals that are baked, broiled, steamed, or grilled
- Avoid any menu item that is fried or with heavy cream sauces (if in doubt, ask)
- Ask for fresh fruit instead of pies or cakes for dessert
- Ask for light salad dressings or lemon wedges to moisten your meat
- Avoid breads, pastas, rice, and potatoes
- Remember to eat slowly and to stop eating when you are full
- Purchase a small calorie/protein counter book and make an informed decision
- Try to order your meal first so that you are not influenced by others