

**The Complete Guide to  
Weight Loss Surgery:  
Your questions finally  
answered**

Lisa Kaouk MPH, RD

Monica Bashaw MScA, RD

## **Dedication**

This book is dedicated to all of our fabulous weight loss surgery (WLS) patients past, present and future. We admire your bravery and life-long commitment in choosing WLS to improve your health. Thank you for sharing your struggles, your tips, your doubts, your fears and your successes with us over the years. Your stories were the inspiration for this book.

- Lisa & Monica

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>Chapter 1: Weight Loss</b>	
▪ Body weight vocabulary, some useful definitions	3
▪ What is ‘normal’ weight loss after WLS?	9
▪ Why am I not losing weight? A conversation about plateaus/stalls	11
▪ I gained one to two pounds since yesterday, what am I doing wrong?	12
▪ My weight has slowly been increasing. I’ve gained one to two pounds over the past week/month. What’s happening?	14
▪ Why are my friends losing more weight than me?	15
▪ I’m struggling to accept my best weight	17
<b>Chapter 2: Tolerance issues</b>	
▪ Nausea and vomiting	21
▪ Why doesn’t food taste the same anymore?	22
▪ Foods blocking or getting stuck	23
▪ What is abnormal food tolerance and when should I contact my WLS team?	24
▪ What foods are difficult to tolerate after surgery?	25
▪ Do I need to avoid nuts and seeds?	30
▪ Our list of well tolerated soft solids	30
▪ What foods can I never eat again after surgery?	31
▪ How can I tenderize my meats and what cuts are better tolerated?	34
▪ I overcooked my meat and now it’s too tough. How can I salvage it?	36
▪ Why do certain foods go down one day, but not the next?	36
▪ Heartburn	38
▪ What can I do to prevent or treat constipation while I’m still on the liquid/puree phase after surgery?	39
▪ What can I do about constipation now that I’ve started	41

- solid foods after surgery? 42
- Is it possible to develop an intolerance to lactose after surgery? 42
- Diarrhea 45

### **Chapter 3: Hunger & Appetite**

- What is the difference between hunger and appetite? 49
- Is it normal that I never feel hungry? 52
- Do I need to eat even if I'm not hungry? 52
- How do I know when I'm full? 54
- How do I know when to start and stop eating? 54

### **Chapter 4: Water**

- Why is water difficult to swallow? 59
- How much water should I drink each day? 60
- Tips for drinking more water 61

### **Chapter 5: Protein**

- Why is protein so important? 65
- How much protein do I need? 65
- The top five foods that people mistake for being high in protein 66
- When is a protein shake or bar a good idea? 68
- When is a protein shake or bar not a good idea? 69
- How do I choose the right protein powders, protein shakes, and protein bars? 70

### **Chapter 6: Delaying Fluids**

- Why can't I eat and drink at the same time? 75
- How long should I be waiting between eating and drinking? 76
- Why am I told to avoid soup after surgery? 77
- Does this mean I need to avoid cereal too? 79

### **Chapter 7: Dumping Syndrome**

- What is dumping syndrome? 81

- Which foods cause dumping syndrome? 82
- Does this mean I can never eat sweets again? 83
- What do I do if I'm in the middle of a reaction? 83

## **Chapter 8: Hair Loss**

- Why am I losing my hair? 87
- Is there anything I can do to prevent hair loss? 88

## **Chapter 9: Alcohol**

- How will I react to alcohol after surgery? 91
- When can I start drinking again after surgery? 92
- What type of alcohol is best for me now? 93
- Alcohol abuse 93

## **Chapter 10: Caffeine**

- How much coffee can I have after surgery? 95

## **Chapter 11: Calories & Carbs**

- How many calories do I need a day? 97
- Does this mean I shouldn't look at the calories on products? 98
- I heard I should be avoiding carbohydrates, is this true? 99

## **Chapter 12: Portions & Structure**

- How often should I be eating? 103
- Why should I weigh and measure my food? 104
- Is it normal that I can't eat more than a ½ cup of food at a time? 105

## **Chapter 13: Eating Out**

- Three things I should NEVER leave home without 107
- What do I eat when I'm out of the house and stuck eating fast food? 108

## **Chapter 14: Cooking, Not Cooking, & Meal Prep**

- What do I do when I don't feel like cooking supper? 111
- How do I choose a frozen meal? 112
- What should I have for lunch if I have difficulty preparing it ahead of time? 113

## **Chapter 15: Self-monitoring**

- Why use a food journal? 115
- Why does my dietitian ask me to keep a food journal? 117
- How often should I weigh myself? 117

## **Chapter 16: Physical Activity**

- If I eat really healthy do I still need to exercise? 119
- Should I have a snack before or after I exercise? 119
- Hydration 121
- What can I do for exercise aside from going to the gym? 122

## **Chapter 17: Vitamins & Mineral Supplements**

- If I eat well, why do I need to take daily vitamins? 125
- How can a WLS dietitian be of assistance with vitamins and deficiencies? 126
- How often do I need to have blood tests? 127

## **Chapter 18: Emotional Changes & Support**

- Emotional changes 131
- The importance of support 132
- Is it possible to develop disordered eating habits after WLS? 133

## **A Final Word from the Authors 135**