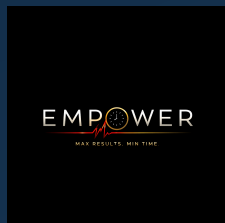

EMPOWER · COMPANION GUIDE

Bypass & Sleeve *Guide*

Everything you need to know before, right after, and for the rest of your life — week by week, plate by plate.



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A Tool, Not a Miracle

Bariatric surgery is one of the most powerful tools we have against severe obesity. It is also the easiest one to waste.

This guide walks you through what you must know *before* you commit, what to expect in the first six weeks, and how to keep the weight off for the rest of your life.

The rules are simple. Living by them every day is the hard part — and the part this guide is built to help you with.

— Before You Go For It

Eight truths the surgeon's office often glosses over. Read them twice. Discuss them with someone you trust before you sign anything.

01 **It's a tool, not a magic wand**

Surgery changes your stomach, not your habits. People who treat it like a shortcut regain most of the weight within 2–5 years. The ones who succeed do the mental work BEFORE the operation.

02 **You will eat differently forever**

No more big plates. No more drinking with meals. No more grabbing food on autopilot. If that sounds unbearable today, work on it now — not in the recovery room.

03 **Vitamins are not optional**

Bypass especially affects how you absorb B12, iron, calcium, and vitamin D. Skipping supplements leads to hair loss, fatigue, brittle bones, and nerve damage. This is for life.

04 **Loose skin is real**

Major weight loss almost always leaves loose skin, especially after 40 or after multiple pregnancies. Knowing this in advance protects you from disappointment after all your hard work.

05 Your relationships will shift

Family meals, social eating, holidays — they all change. Some people in your life will be uncomfortable with the new you. Decide now that your health comes first.

06 Emotional eating doesn't disappear

The stomach is smaller. The brain is not. If food was your coping mechanism, you need a new one BEFORE surgery — therapy, journaling, walking, a support group. Otherwise it returns as grazing or alcohol.

07 Pregnancy must wait 12–18 months

Rapid weight loss combined with nutrient gaps is unsafe for a developing baby. Use reliable contraception. Plan with your doctor.

08 There's no going back

A sleeve removes 80% of your stomach. A bypass reroutes your digestive system. These are not reversible. Make the decision with your eyes wide open.

SECTION TWO

Right After Surgery

The first six weeks follow a strict food-texture progression. Skip a phase and you risk leaks, ulcers, and a long trip back to the hospital.

WEEKS 1 • 2

Liquids only

Water, broth, sugar-free jello, clear protein drinks, herbal tea. Sip — never gulp. Aim for 1.5L per day and 60g of protein from shakes.

WEEKS 3 • 4

Pureed

Greek yogurt, cottage cheese, blended soups, pureed chicken or fish, mashed avocado, scrambled egg. Texture of baby food. Still no drinking with meals.

WEEKS 5 • 6

Soft foods

Soft-cooked fish, ground meat, soft eggs, well-cooked vegetables, ripe banana. Chew everything to applesauce consistency. 20–30 chews per bite.

Solid foods

Slowly introduce normal textures. Always protein first, then vegetables, then a small amount of carbs if there's room. Most people fit 100–150g of food per meal.

SECTION THREE

The Ten Golden Rules

Print these. Tape them inside your kitchen cabinet. These rules don't expire — they apply on day 1, year 5, and year 25.

- 01

Protein first. Always. Aim for 60–80g per day.
- 02

Don't drink 30 min before, during, or 30 min after meals.
- 03

Sip water all day between meals — minimum 1.5–2L.
- 04

Chew every bite 20–30 times. Eat slowly.
- 05

Stop at the first sign of fullness. One bite past = pain.
- 06

No soda, no straws, no chewing gum (air hurts the pouch).
- 07

Avoid sugar — dumping syndrome is real and miserable.
- 08

Take your vitamins every single day. For life.
- 09

Walk daily from week 1. Resistance training by month 3.
- 10

Weigh weekly, not daily. Track inches and energy too.

SECTION FOUR

Eating Plan by Phase

— Months 1–3 · Healing & Habits

Tiny portions, mostly protein, focused on healing. You will not feel hungry — this is normal. Eat by the clock, not by appetite.

MEAL	WHAT TO EAT
BREAKFAST	Protein shake (20–30g) or ½ cup Greek yogurt
SNACK	½ cup cottage cheese or a few bites of soft cheese
LUNCH	60–80g soft fish or ground chicken + 2 Tbsp pureed veg
SNACK	Protein shake or ricotta with cinnamon
DINNER	60–80g soft eggs / fish / soft meat + 2 Tbsp vegetables
EVENING	Herbal tea, sugar-free jello, or sip of broth

Total daily food is roughly the size of a small yogurt cup per meal. Target 60g of protein daily — supplement with shakes if you fall short. Carbs are minimal in this phase. That's intentional.

— Months 3–6 · Rebuilding the Plate

You can eat most textures now. The window for fast weight loss is wide open — use it. Build the habits that will carry you for life.

MEAL	IDEAS
BREAKFAST	2 scrambled eggs + tomato · Greek yogurt + berries + chia · Cottage cheese + cucumber
LUNCH	Grilled chicken (90g) + spinach + avocado · Tuna salad with light mayo · Turkey meatballs + zucchini
DINNER	Baked salmon (90g) + broccoli · Beef stir-fry with peppers · Chicken soup with soft veg
SNACKS	Hard-boiled egg · String cheese · Protein shake · Edamame (¼ cup)

Aim for 70–80g protein daily. Add a short walk after each meal — even 10 minutes helps. Reintroduce strength training 2–3x per week to protect muscle.

— After 6 Months · Real Life

This is the long game. The pouch has settled. Hunger is real again. The rules don't change — protein first, no drinking with meals, vitamins forever — but now you can build truly satisfying meals.

01 Protein at every meal

90–120g per meal of meat, fish, or eggs — non-negotiable.

02 Vegetables fill the rest of the plate

Non-starchy and generous. Color is your guide.

03 Treats fit — but planned

A scheduled indulgence is not a slip. An impulsive one usually is.

Catch a 3-kilo regain before it becomes 10. The scale is your early-warning system.

SECTION FIVE

Low-Carb, High-Protein Recipes

Satisfying meals that fit a small pouch. Each one is built around protein first, with smart fats and non-starchy vegetables to keep you full without filling the carb budget.

Cottage Cheese & Berry Bowl

5 MIN · 22G PROTEIN

INGREDIENTS

½ cup low-fat cottage cheese · ¼ cup mixed berries · 1 tsp chia seeds · cinnamon

METHOD

Spoon cottage cheese in a small bowl, top with berries, chia, and a dusting of cinnamon. Perfect breakfast or post-workout snack.

Chicken Zoodle Soup

25 MIN · 28G PROTEIN

INGREDIENTS

1 chicken breast, diced · 4 cups low-sodium broth · 1 zucchini, spiralized · garlic, ginger, salt, pepper · fresh parsley

METHOD

Simmer chicken in broth with garlic and ginger 10 min. Add zoodles, cook 2 more min. Finish with parsley. Warming, easy on the pouch, high protein.

Egg White & Spinach Muffins

30 MIN · MEAL-PREP · 12G PROTEIN EACH

INGREDIENTS

8 egg whites + 2 whole eggs · 1 cup spinach, chopped · ¼ cup feta · salt, pepper, garlic powder

METHOD

Whisk eggs, fold in spinach and feta, season. Pour into a greased muffin tin (makes 6). Bake at 180°C / 350°F for 20 min. Grab-and-go breakfast for the week.

Tuna-Stuffed Avocado

10 MIN · NO COOK · 25G PROTEIN

INGREDIENTS

1 can tuna in water, drained · 1 ripe avocado, halved · 1 Tbsp Greek yogurt · lemon juice, dill, salt, pepper

METHOD

Mix tuna with yogurt, lemon, dill, salt, and pepper. Spoon into the avocado halves.
Healthy fats and protein in one light lunch — no cooking required.

Turkey & Zucchini Meatballs

30 MIN · 30G PROTEIN PER SERVING

INGREDIENTS

500g lean ground turkey · 1 zucchini, grated and squeezed dry · 1 egg, garlic, parsley, salt
· 2 Tbsp grated parmesan

METHOD

Mix everything and form small meatballs. Bake at 200°C / 400°F for 18–20 min. Serve with marinara and a side of roasted veg. Freezes beautifully.

Baked Salmon with Lemon-Dill Yogurt

20 MIN · 32G PROTEIN

INGREDIENTS

1 salmon fillet (120g) · olive oil, salt, pepper, lemon · 2 Tbsp Greek yogurt · fresh dill, garlic, lemon juice

METHOD

Season the salmon and bake at 200°C / 400°F for 12 min. Mix yogurt with dill, garlic, and lemon. Spoon over the salmon and serve with steamed asparagus.

Chocolate Protein Mousse

5 MIN · 25G PROTEIN

INGREDIENTS

1 scoop chocolate protein powder · ½ cup Greek yogurt · 1 Tbsp cocoa powder · splash of milk or almond milk · vanilla, sweetener if needed

METHOD

Whisk everything until smooth and thick. Chill for 10 minutes. Sweet, satisfying, and hits the dessert craving without dumping.

Cauliflower Crust Pizza

35 MIN · 24G PROTEIN PER SLICE

INGREDIENTS

Cauliflower crust (store-bought is fine) · 2 Tbsp tomato sauce · 60g shredded (pareve) cheese · sliced chicken or turkey pepperoni · fresh basil, oregano

METHOD

Top the crust and bake per package directions. One slice is usually a full meal post-surgery — protein-loaded, low carb, and feels like a real treat.



*“Protein first.
Vitamins always.
Eyes wide open.”*

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