Ramadan and Other Religious Fasts After Bariatric Surgery

Fasting as a way to regain or refocus spirituality is common in many religions e.g. Yom Kippur in the Jewish faith, Lent in Christianity and Ramadan in the Muslim faith.

Patients who have undergone a bariatric surgery including gastric banding, sleeve gastrectomy and gastric bypass are required to make special dietary changes to avoid health risks. Patients are advised to not to fast in the first 12 - 18 months after bariatric surgery to prevent dehydration, malnutrition and medical complications.

Patients having undergone a bariatric surgery may face some challenges during an extended period of fasting such as during the holy month of Ramadan. These challenges could include;

- **Altered eating behaviours and poor nutritional intake:** Following a bariatric surgery, patients are normally advised to have small, frequent meals, eat slowly, chew thoroughly, separate eating and drinking and stop when feeling satisfied. However, fasting for long periods could lead to the desire to consume larger quantities at a faster pace upon breaking the fast. This could result in abdominal discomfort, nausea and vomiting leading to dehydration, malnutrition and possible vitamin and mineral deficiencies.

- **Dehydration:** It is advised to consume at least 1.5 - 2L of fluids throughout the day following a bariatric surgery to keep hydrated and help prevent constipation. Following bariatric surgery it is not possible to drink quickly, drink large amounts in one sitting or eat and drink together. These restrictions, together with a total fast during long summer days would increase the risk of dehydration.

- **Dumping Syndrome:** Patients who have undergone a gastric bypass/sleeve gastrectomy surgery are more at risk of experiencing abdominal pain, dumping syndrome and/or diarrhoea due to an irregular meal pattern and consumption of sweet desserts and deep-fried foods when breaking the fast.

- **Hypoglycaemia:** The risk of hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar level) is increased when fasting for a significant period of time (i.e. more than 10hours)

- **Vitamin and mineral deficiencies:** Following bariatric surgery, patients are recommended to take regular vitamins and minerals by their dietitians or nurses. The vitamins/minerals need to be spaced appropriately throughout the day. One of the challenges during a period of fasting is that the reduced stomach volume may make it difficult to have all of the recommended vitamins and minerals in a short time frame and space them adequately which may result in some deficiencies.

compassionate care

Dietary and life-style recommendations for bariatric surgery patients during religious fasts

- **Break the fast** by choosing water, dried fruits including dates/prunes, yogurt or soup to prepare your body for the main meal. Beginning with water will help to overcome dehydration from fasting and having 1-2 dates/prunes with 2 tablespoons of low fat/high protein yogurt will help to raise blood glucose levels after fasting for long hours (see example meal plan below).
- Ensure **good hydration;** begin with 200-250ml of water or milk. Aim to have at least 1.5L fluids per day.
- Ensure the main meal contains **protein-rich food eg beans, lentils, chicken, meat or dairy.** Always start eating the protein rich foods first then, vegetables and lastly carbohydrates such as rice, chapatti or potatoes.
- **Avoid sleeping directly after eating** as this can lead to health problems such as acid reflux, abdominal discomfort and/or regurgitation.
- **Remember the golden rules:** eat slowly, chew thoroughly, separate eating and drinking, stop when you feel satisfied and avoid fizzy/sugary drinks.
- **Avoid foods high in fat/sugar** such as sweet desserts or deep-fried meals to avoid symptoms of **dumping syndrome.**
- Continue to **take vitamin and mineral supplements** as per recommendations.
- Continue with your routine **physical activities during fasting;** however schedule them at appropriate times. For instance; exercise 2 hours after breaking the fast, then have a snack after the post work-out recovery.

Example of Meal Plan

Break the fast	**OPTIONS** ***Break the fast with:*** 250ml of water 2 Dates/Prunes and 2 tablespoon of high protein yoghurt **OR**
	200 ml of Lentil or Chicken soup
	WAIT AT LEAST 15-20MINS AND HAVE A MAIN MEAL
	4-5 tablespoon of beef/lamb/chicken/fish stew or curry or 1 chicken breast/1 fish fillet/3 grilled kofta/ 3 lamb chops with a small portion of salad or cooked vegetables and 2 tablespoons of rice/1 small chapatti/1 small pitta or slice of bread
SNACKS or smaller meals	1 Tub of high protein Yoghurt (Fage 0%, Skyr, Arla) **OR** 1 Handful of mixed nuts and a piece of fruit or any other high protein snack alternatives **OR** (see list on next page)
	1 Protein Shake (at least 20g protein per shake) **OR** 300ml of Semi/ Skimmed milk or Lacto free/Soy milk and 1 banana **OR**
	300ml of yoghurt drink (Ayran: homemade: add 2 extra tablespoon of skimmed milk powder) **OR**
	1 small bowl or 1 side plate of Foul Mudammas (Egyptian Fava Beans) **OR**
	Egg, tuna, low fat cheese or mixed beans sandwich made with, 2 slices of wholegrain or granary bread with a salad and 1 piece of fruit **OR**
	1 Tub of high protein yoghurt topped with a sprinkle of mixed nuts, seeds and a portion of fruit **OR**
	45g of porridge with chopped fruits of your choice and sprinkle of mixed nuts

Healthy Snack Alternatives

- Mixed nuts and dried fruit (closed handful)
- Sliced apple or celery with a tablespoon of natural peanut butter
- Two oat cakes topped with cottage cheese and black pepper
- 1 small pot of low-fat /high protein yoghurt and a portion of fruit
- Handful of carrot sticks with two tablespoons hummus
- 1-2 x Ryvita crackers topped up with oily fish e.g. pilchards/tuna/salmon flakes
- 5 x crab sticks
- 1 chicken drumstick
- 1 hard-boiled egg
- 2 x rice cakes topped up with 1-2 tablespoon of peanut butter
- Home-made fruit/vegetable
- 1 x protein bar
- 1-2 mini Babybel or cheese triangles
- 2 x slices of turkey/chicken
- Pumpkin seeds (closed handful)
- Low-fat yogurt drink i.e. Ayran
- 1 small bowl of mixed fruit salad
- 1 small bowl of salad with a matchbox size of feta cheese
  (add 2 teaspoon of olive oil and lemon dressing)
- 1 small cup of foul Mudammas (Egyptian Fava beans)
- 250ml of skimmed/semi-skimmed milk

Dessert alternatives:

Sugar-free jelly, dried dates or prunes (no more than 3), low-fat custard, rice pudding and any other low-fat and low-sugar dessert alternatives

If you have any questions or comments about this leaflet or the service you have received please contact :

Your Healthcare Professionals:

Melanie Langley

(Bariatric Surgery Specialist Dietitian)

Telephone: 07836711515

or

Cara Barnes

(Bariatric Surgery Specialist Nurse)

Telephone: 07824599736

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obrat'te se prosim na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪਾਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,
ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ اور زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
براۓ مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"