



# Nutrition

Food plays an important role in helping you heal. Eating enough calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals can help you get better faster.

Before your surgery, eat a healthy balanced diet to better prepare you for the procedure and your recovery. It is important to eat enough so your body has the right material to build tissue, minimize muscle loss, and help you fight infections.

If you are losing weight, you are likely not getting enough calories. Below are some tips that you may find helpful.

## Improve my nutritional status before surgery

- Make the most of each bite by **choosing high protein, nutrient rich foods**. For example: chicken, beef, pork, tofu, fish, eggs, Greek yogurt, milk
- Try to eat at least **3 meals and 1 snack** a day to help meet your calorie and protein needs
- For **quick and easy snacks**, try items like protein bars, nut butter on toast, hummus and crackers or trail mix
- **Choose fresh, frozen or canned fruits**. They are a good source of vitamins and minerals
- **Limit foods** like pop, potato chips, and chocolate bars. They are low in nutrients. Nutrients are needed for healing
- Discuss with your doctor to see if you should take a multivitamin and mineral tab

It may be helpful to speak to a family doctor or a dietitian if you have had any of the following:

- Unexplained weight loss or weight gain in the past 6 weeks
- Decrease in appetite
- Nausea
- Problems with digestion
- Problems with swallowing

A dietitian can help you choose healthy foods that will help prepare you for surgery.

You can get a referral to see a dietitian from your family doctor or if you have questions about your diet, contact HealthLink BC by dialing 8-1-1 on your phone and ask to speak to a dietitian (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday). Be sure to tell them you are going for surgery.

## Resources:

Canada Food Guide  
<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>



Healthy eating for your condition  
<https://bit.ly/HealthyEatingforYou>



Healthy eating for seniors  
<https://bit.ly/HealthyEatingforSeniors>



VCH Healthy Plate  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn1D\\_vbnXTc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn1D_vbnXTc)





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