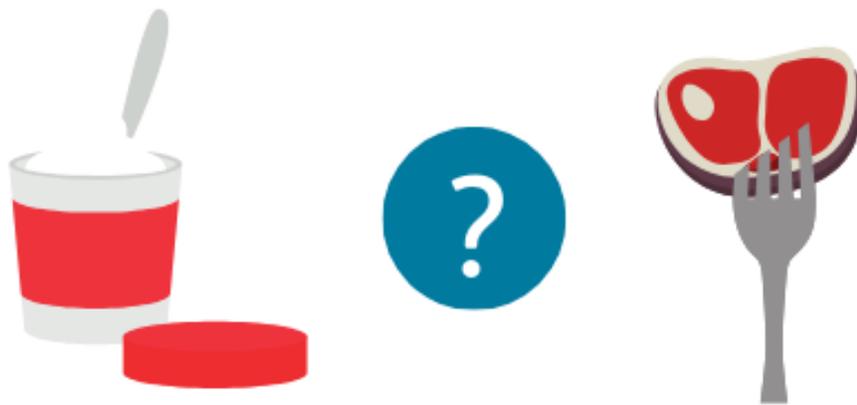


Soft Protein Foods vs Solid Protein Foods after Bariatric Surgery

Why soft solid protein textures matter for hunger control



A member question...

What would be considered hard proteins?

My doctor suggested eating them to keep me fuller longer.

This is a fantastic question. Soft solid protein is a really helpful discussion that makes sense when we talk about it, but sometimes we don't think to talk about it!

You may have also heard this is "slider foods" to watch out for.

The texture of protein matters **BIG TIME** after bariatric surgery. Not just in the healing phases but in controlling hunger long term.

In my bariatric food coaching, I like to put protein sources into three main categories.

liquid protein



soft protein



solid protein



Liquid protein: protein shakes, protein waters

Soft protein: Greek yogurt, cottage cheese, scrambled eggs, refried beans, flakey fish, shaved deli meat, tuna salad, dark meat poultry

Solid protein: chicken breast, hamburger patty, pork chop, pork tenderloin, steak

Every bariatric program is different in how they progress the diet after surgery and what foods they put in what stages. These three categories may not line up with what your program approved you to eat during a "soft stage" diet, this is just the way I categorize the texture of proteins.



Zucchini Turkey Burger

Why solid (or 'hard') proteins?

This member said her surgeon recommended *hard proteins*. What does that mean and why would she/he say that?

Once you have progressed enough from your surgery and are fully cleared for solid textured protein, those are the textures that are most recommended for fullness and prolonged satiety.

Satiety: the feeling of fullness

When a Gastric Sleeve or Bypass patient has a leftover hamburger patty for lunch with a few green beans, that meal will stay with them longer. **Note: if he/she takes black bean sized bites, eats slowly and doesn't drink liquid during or 45 minutes after the meal**

This patient would have maximized their surgery pouch by filling up on a solid, hard protein that fills them up on a smaller portion size and keeps them full longer. A ground beef or turkey burger patty is dense and packed with protein so it will take longer to transit through the stomach pouch.



Compare that to softer proteins

If instead a patient ate some tuna salad and cottage cheese for lunch, he or she could have eaten a larger portion because the soft protein goes down easier. Hunger would also be more likely to return sooner because the soft texture would move through the stomach pouch more quickly.

[A leftover burger patty would fill up the stomach with less food, keep hunger away.](#)

[Tuna salad and cottage cheese would have a larger portion and hunger would return sooner.](#)

Even if both of those meals are protein packed, one would likely lead to better weight loss results in the end. A smaller portion and less snacking with the solid protein option.

Note: this is not to say you should never have flakey fish or dark meat chicken. It IS to say to pay attention to textures and your hunger control. If you are struggling with snacking and keeping hunger in check, take a look at textures.

When solid proteins don't go down well

What if the idea of a chicken breast or a hamburger patty sounds like a recipe for discomfort and queasiness?

If you struggle to feel well after a solid protein, the most likely reason is too large of bites or eating too quickly. Because the opening of your stomach pouch is so small, bites larger than even a black bean can back up at the top of the stomach and make you feel:

a) uncomfortable

b) pre-mature fullness

Pre-mature fullness: when you stop eating after a few bites, think you are full, but hungry an hour later



Berry Cream Protein Shake

What about the liquid proteins?

I covered the soft versus solid proteins after bariatric surgery. What about liquid proteins?

This is a little more complex in my opinion. More often than not, protein shakes are not needed for long after weight loss surgery. Again, many bariatric programs differ in their recommendations so this is where it gets complex.

The ASMBS (American Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery) recommends 60 grams of protein a day. That number can be reached when a patient is eating 3 ounces of protein at three meals a day. This means most patients can wean down and off liquid protein as their intake grows at their meal times.

My personal coaching does not recommend replacing a meal with a protein shake but instead focusing on a food based protein at meals. Members can find out more in my video course [The Do's and Don'ts of Protein](#).

To sum it up, food based solid protein wins

Let's sum up the basics. To maximize the hunger control available to you with your pouch, set a schedule of three meals a day and focus on a food based, solid protein at each meal.

You will fill up at each meal and feel satisfied in between meals.

For sure it isn't always easy (read: food is everywhere) but this basic, foundational practice is what sets you up for better success when temptation calls!

Steph :)