

# Spine Surgery Dietary Information

Eating and drinking certain types of foods before your surgery can make recovery easier for your body.

**WE RECOMMEND A FOUR STEP NUTRITIONAL PLAN BEFORE AND AFTER YOUR SURGERY.**

## Why do I need to follow a special diet before surgery?

Several studies find that patients may recover better when they follow a special diet before surgery. Eating high protein and high carbohydrate foods for a few weeks before surgery will give your body the fuel needed to heal after surgery. Protein supplements add special types of amino acids that can improve healing. Carbohydrate drinks right before surgery also help replace the energy your body needs while you're asleep for the surgery. This special diet may also help by:

- Making you feel less thirsty and less hungry before and after the surgery.
- You will likely have better blood sugar control after surgery.
- Your intestine may return to normal function more quickly after surgery.
- You may even have a shorter hospital stay.

## How do I follow the special diet?

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Starting two to four weeks before your surgery, try your best to eat a high protein, high carbohydrate diet. <b>See step 1: high protein high calorie diet.</b>	Based on your protein levels, you may be asked to start a protein supplement two times a day. <b>See step 2: Protein supplement options.</b>	On the day of your surgery, three hours before your surgery, drink one bottle of the carbohydrate drink. <b>See step 3: carbohydrate drink options.</b>	Starting right after your surgery, you will take protein supplements as directed by your surgeon. You'll start these drinks while you are recovering in the hospital. Depending on when you're discharged, you'll likely need to complete your post-operative protein supplements at home. <b>See step 4: after surgery protein supplement options.</b>

## What else can I eat or drink before surgery?

- You may drink clear liquids such as water, plain tea or coffee (no milk or creamer), clear broth, Gatorade, soda or apple juice up to five hours before you arrive for surgery.
- 3 hours prior to your arrival time, drink one bottle of Ensure Clear.

## I'm diabetic and my doctors told me to watch carbohydrates. What should I do?

- Check with your surgeon, but you still may be able to do most, if not all, of this program. There are low carbohydrate options.
- Remind your anesthesiologist and surgeon that you have diabetes and that your blood sugar should be checked before and during surgery.



### **I don't like the taste of the protein supplements. What can I do?**

Add something and mix it up a little! Recipes for delicious shakes and smoothies using your protein supplements (but not the carbohydrate drinks) can be found here:

- [www.preparedforsurgery.com/recipes](http://www.preparedforsurgery.com/recipes)
- [ensure.com/recipes/drinks-smoothies](http://ensure.com/recipes/drinks-smoothies)

*Note: Patients with allergies should be mindful of the ingredients in each drink. The strawberry flavored drink will contain derivatives of natural strawberry, grape flavored will contain derivatives of natural grapes, etc.*

### **STEP 1: HIGH PROTEIN & HIGH CALORIE DIET**

Protein is a nutrient needed for normal growth, wound healing and fighting infections. If you're not eating enough protein, it'll be difficult for your skin to heal. It's also important to eat a balanced diet with healthy food choices and enough calories to meet your needs. Your doctor has suggested you follow a diet high in protein to help repair and build new skin tissue.

#### **Why should I follow a high calorie and high protein diet?**

- To eat enough calories to prevent protein from being used as energy instead of tissue building
- To provide enough calories and protein to reach and maintain goal weight

#### **General Diet Guidelines and Tips**

- You don't always have to eat a lot, but try to eat often. Try eating six times a day, or every two to three hours.
- Stay well hydrated with water, unsweetened drinks, 100% juice or milk.
- If you have other health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure or kidney disease, follow your doctor's advice about special diet restrictions.

#### **Protein-Rich Snack Ideas**

Snacks are a great way to increase protein in your diet. Here are some healthy ideas to get started.

- Nuts
- Trail mix
- Greek yogurt
- Hard-boiled egg
- Cheese and crackers
- Edamame (soybeans)
- Almond butter and apple slices
- Hummus with fresh vegetables
- Cottage cheese and fresh fruit
- Turkey and cheese sandwich
- Peanut butter sandwich

## HIGH PROTEIN MENU EXAMPLE

<p><b>Breakfast</b></p> <p>1 hard-boiled egg  <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup dry cereal with 1 cup of milk  <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup strawberries  <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup orange juice</p>	<p><b>Morning Snack</b></p> <p>2 tablespoons peanut butter  1 medium apple</p>
<p><b>Lunch</b></p> <p>3 ounces of turkey in a sandwich  1 cup bean or lentil soup  1 cup milk</p>	<p><b>Afternoon Snack</b></p> <p><math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup cottage cheese with peaches</p>
<p><b>Dinner</b></p> <p>3 ounces cooked salmon  1 medium baked potato  1 tablespoon sour cream  1 cup steamed broccoli  4 whole grain crackers with 2 tablespoons hummus  1 cup milk</p>	<p><b>Evening Snack</b></p> <p><math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup yogurt  2 tablespoons chopped walnuts  <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup strawberries</p>

## SAMPLE 7 DAY HIGH-CALORIE AND HIGH-PROTEIN MEAL PLAN. EACH MEAL HAS BETWEEN 400 TO 600 CALORIES.

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<p>1 cup cereal  1 cup whole milk  1 fruit  8 ounce juice</p>	<p>4 ounce chicken breast  1 slice whole grain bread  <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> avocado  2 slices tomato  1 cup whole milk</p>	<p>1 cup turkey chili  2 ounce cornbread  8 ounces juice</p>
<p>2 slices whole grain bread  2 tbsp. peanut butter  1 banana  1 cup whole milk</p>	<p>4 ounces tuna in oil 1 slice whole grain bread  Side salad:  - 1 cup lettuce  - <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup tomato  - <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup cucumber  - <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup carrots  - <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup mushrooms  - 1 tbsp salad dressing  12 ounce water</p>	<p>4 ounce steak  <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup cooked vegetable  1 baked potato  - 1 tbsp sour cream  - 1 tsp butter  12 ounces water</p>
<p>3 eggs scrambled with: 1 ounce of cheese <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of spinach <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of diced tomatoes 1 slice whole grain bread 1 tsp of butter 12 ounces water</p>	<p>Macaroni and cheese:  - 1 cup cooked pasta  - 2 ounces cheese  - 1 cup cooked vegetable  8 ounces juice</p>	<p>4 ounce grilled salmon  1 cup brown rice  1 cup cooked vegetable  12 ounce water</p>

(continued on next page)

1 (6-ounce) yogurt 1 small fruit 8 ounces juice	1 slice pizza with meat Side salad: - 1 cup lettuce - ¼ cup tomato - ¼ cup cucumber - ¼ cup carrots - ¼ cup mushrooms - 1 tbsp salad dressing 8 ounces juice	Spaghetti with meatballs: - 1 cup pasta - 3 ounces meatballs - ½ cup tomato sauce 12 ounces water
3 eggs scrambled with 2 ounces cheese 1 slice whole grain bread 12 ounces water	1 large (4-ounce) bagel 4 ounces cottage cheese 1 fruit 1 cup whole milk	Burrito: - 1 flour tortilla - 4 ounces chicken - 2 ounces cheese - ¼ tomato - ¼ cup brown rice - ¼ cup beans Salsa 12 ounces water
2 slices French toast 1 cup fruit 12 ounces water	2 slices whole grain bread 4 ounces lunch meat ⅓ avocado 2 slices tomato 8 ounces juice	4-ounce hamburger on bun Side salad: - 1 cup lettuce - ¼ cup tomato ¼ cup cucumber - ¼ cup carrots - ¼ cup mushrooms - 1 tbsp salad dressing 8 ounces juice
Breakfast Burrito: - 2 eggs - 1 ounce cheese - 1 flour tortilla - ½ cup of spinach - ½ cup of tomato 12 ounce water	1, 4-ounce bagel 2 tbsp hummus ½ avocado 2 slices tomato ¼ cup sprouts 8 ounces juice	4 ounces grilled chicken 1 cup brown rice 1 cup cooked vegetable 8 ounces juice

## STEP 2: PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS (CHOOSE ONE)

### Protein Supplements

Specially designed to support immune health and recovery from surgery. Protein supplements contain high-quality protein, arginine, and fish oil to help your body prepare for, and recover from, surgery.

Premixed Shake	Protein	Carbohydrate	Calories
Premier Protein	30 grams	5-7 grams	160-180
Fairlife Core Power	24-26 grams	5-7 grams	130-170

Protein Powder	Protein	Carbohydrate	Calories
Premier	30 grams	5-7 grams	160-180
GNC Lean Shake Green	25 grams	6-13 grams	170-180

May be added to Gatorade Zero

Protein Bars	Protein	Carbohydrate	Calories
Muscle Milk	15-20 grams	20-23 grams	170-190
One	20 grams	22-23 grams	210-230
Quest	20-21 grams	21-23 grams	190-200

### STEP 3: CARBOHYDRATE DRINKS

#### Ensure® Pre-Surgery Clear Carbohydrate Drink

Formulated to help your body prepare for, and recover from surgery. Each bottle of Ensure Pre-Surgery Clear Carbohydrate Drink is formulated with carbohydrates and antioxidants to help your body prepare for, and recover from, surgery. Every drink has:

- 50 grams carbohydrates
- Antioxidants: Zinc, selenium
- 200 calories
- Refreshing strawberry flavor
- Gluten-free
- Suitable for lactose intolerance
- Halal
- Kosher

### STEP 4: AFTER SURGERY PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS (CHOOSE ONE)

#### Protein Supplements

Specially designed to support immune health and recovery from surgery. Protein Supplements contain high-quality protein, arginine, and fish oil to help your body prepare for, and recover from, surgery. See table in Step 2 for recommended protein supplements.