

DR. KURI & ASSOCIATES

THE #1 CHOICE FOR LAP-BAND® SURGERY

Dear Patient,

We are so glad that you were able to travel to Mexico today for your fill. Dr. Kuri enjoys reconnecting with you, and is glad that you were able to make the trip.

We have compiled some information that we hope will benefit you during this visit and your continued Lap-Band journey. Please feel free to ask questions, or request help if you need it. We want you to get the most out of your visit today.

I welcome you to contact your Patient Education Coordinator, Gena Brown, at any time.

Gena is on staff to Educate, and support Dr. Kuri's patients in the areas of Weight Management, nutrition, Physical activity, and living a banded life. She is available to help guide you as you work towards your health and weight loss goals. One on one counseling is available to help you get back on track should you need it.

Here is Gena's contact information:

Gena Brown
Patient Education Coordinator
Dr. Kuri & Associates
Direct Line | 951 845-9761
Dr. Kuri's Office | 1-888-223-4046 (toll-free from US)
Dr. Kuri's Office | 1-866-782-5042 (toll-free from Canada)
gena@lapbandsurgery.com
<http://lapbandsurgery.com>

Wishing you the best in success,

The entire Kuri team

Improving Your Chances for a Successful Fill

Although doctors and fill providers make every effort to give their patients a perfect fill level every time, it is not always possible to predict how a patient will respond after receiving a fill adjustment. There are however, certain things that can be done to increase your chances of getting a good fill the first time.

Determining if you are ready for a fill

First fills and all subsequent fills are not given on a routine basis. Instead, they are given according to a patient's individual needs. In no case should a fill be given before 6 weeks post band surgery. Please check the files for information regarding when a fill is needed to determine if you are ready for a fill.

When to avoid receiving another fill

It is a common mistake to think that a really tight fill will improve your chances at weight loss. That is simply not the case. There is no advantage gained by having a too tight fill, and in many cases can cause many problems and disappointment in your results. If you are having any trouble with your current fill such as; regular pain, frequent vomiting episodes, reflux problems, not able to drink fluids, eat soft or solid foods without problems, you are not a good candidate for a fill at this time. Rather you should consider needing a un-fill to improve any of these problems.

How to prepare for a fill adjustment

As a banded patient keeping yourself well hydrated is always important. But even more so, when you are going to receive a fill. Keeping hydrated will help prevent your stoma from swelling and improve the accuracy of your fill.

Start several days before your appointment, making sure you are taking in 64 to 80 ounces of fluids daily. If you engage in strenuous work or exercise, make sure you replace fluids with extra water. Avoid alcohol, coffee, tea and soups or foods with excessive amounts of sodium, as these beverages and foods can have a dehydrating effect on the body. Stick with no-calorie, non-carbonated beverages or just plain water.

If you are traveling by plane you may want to keep a bottle of water in your carryon luggage or purchase water on the plane, as a plane flight can also dehydrate your body somewhat. Take little sips up to and throughout your flight. You may want to choose a seat near the bathroom or select an aisle seat when making your reservation if you have a choice.

Eating before a fill

To receive a good fill requires that your pouch is empty. For this reason you should not eat solid or soft foods 6-8 hours before your fill. Full liquids are fine in small amounts, but discontinue 2 hours before your fill appointment.

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Avoid eating a heavy, spicy or a late meal the night before. Avoid eating anything that may cause you to have a PB episode. You want your stomach to be as peaceful as possible.

Relax

Relax and get a good night's rest, there is nothing to worry about. Receiving a fill is very routine. It is similar to getting your blood drawn. We want you to be calm and relaxed for your fill. Stress can cause a false tightening of your stoma, and can make it harder to get a good fill.

Ladies check your calendar

Ladies avoid scheduling a fill during your menstrual period or several days before, as you may be retaining water at that time. This may reduce your chance for a good fill.

Hot and cold beverages

Avoid drinking either hot or ice cold beverages for one hour before your appointment. Hot drinks can over relax and open your stoma, and cold drinks will cause your stoma to close. Either hot or cold can give a false reading, and you can end up too tight or not tight enough.

Recovering from a Fill adjustment

The first 24-48 hours following a fill should be considered a period of recovery. The stomach as a rule can be a very grumpy organ, any small change and the stomach will react with swelling.

Your results from your fill may not be apparent for a couple of weeks. It can take 1-2 weeks for your stomach to return to a more settled condition. It is important not to force food through the smaller opening. Any irritation will delay your recovery. You may also end up needing a un-fill if you continue to irritate your stomach.

It is important to remember that your latest fill adjustment changed the size of the opening through the stoma. Many of the foods you were able to eat easily may now give you some trouble. A slow approach is recommended and taking small bites and chewing your food thoroughly becomes more important than ever.

This is a good time to refer back to the post-op diet you were given when you first had your surgery. Pay close attention to the sections on full liquids, soft foods and introduction to solid foods. You may also want to take this time to remind yourself of the 10 Lap-Band rules.

Keep yourself hydrated

Keeping yourself properly hydrated after your fill is important to the recovery phase. It is also a good indicator of how your new fill feels. After your fill you should be able to drink room temperature water with no problem. If you can't get water down you may need a un-fill. It is recommended that you stay in the lobby for awhile after your fill to make sure you can tolerate your new fill level. You don't want to be traveling home before you realize you are too tight and need to return.

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Traveling Home

If you have traveled some distance to receive your fill, you may consider staying the night and leave the next day. This will give you a chance to test your new fill level with some full liquids and possibly a bite or two of soft foods, before you get on a plane or start a long drive back home. This will save you the inconvenience of having to return for an un-fill.

24 - 48 hr. recovery diet

Just like after your surgery you are going to ease back to solid food again. Except this time you will complete it in 2 days.

Stay on full liquids for the first 24 hours if you can. Full liquids are liquids that can easily go through a straw. If you did fine with full liquids you can move on to soft foods. Soft foods are foods you could eat if you had no teeth. Use good judgment; if you have had no trouble at this point you can slowly introduce soft cooked solid foods again.

Testing your new fill level

If you have completed your 48 hour recovery diet, and have had no problems, you should start to test your new fill level by eating a typical Bandster type meal. A typical Bandster meal will consist of 2-4 ounces of soft-cooked solid protein followed by a 1/2 cup of vegetables. This meal should be able to keep you satisfied for 3-4 hours.

If you cannot eat moist solid protein, and can only eat soft foods or liquids then you may be too tight. If this is the case, don't make the mistake of eating "easy foods" to get by. You will find that "easy foods" can easily be over eaten defeating the purpose of the band. Patients that go this route will train themselves to eat around the band and actually gain weight, leading to disappointing results.

The slow approach is better

Your approach to receiving your fills should be slow and gradual. Although patients vary as to how many fills they may require. The key is to gradually introduce some pressure and restriction to give the patient time to adjust their eating habits and promote a perfect fill level for sustained weight loss.

If this is your first fill experience, or one of many you may have had, good preparation before and a little maintenance after your fill will greatly improve your chances for a successful fill.

If you have further questions about improving your chances for a successful fill, you have an entire staff available to you. You may contact:

- Your Patient Facilitator – if you are unsure who this is, we will find out for you and provider her contact information.

- Your Patient Education Coordinator, Gena Brown - Here is her contact information:

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- Your surgeon or his staff – If you'd like to discuss your concerns with someone today, please let Anabel know you have questions.

The following pages contain helpful tips and information in the area of healthy Band care, nutrition and exercise. Much of this information was provided to you after surgery; however we find it helpful to be reminded of the fundamental guidelines that will help you achieve the best results with your Lap-Band.

Bandster Basics

The 10 Lap-Band Success Rules

Before we move on, we need to go over the 10 very important rules that you will need to follow in order to successfully lose weight with the Lap-Band. The Lap-Band rules for most take some time to adjust to. Think of a baby just learning how to eat on their own. You will need to adjust habits that took you a life time to learn. It is very important as you the patient become very familiar with these rules and follow all, not just some, but all the rules for your continued success as a banded patient. It is possible for a patient to “eat around” the rules by making poor food choices, or not making the necessary lifestyle changes to become successful. This will only lead to disappointment down the road. If you are having trouble following the rules we are happy to assist you.

The 10 Lap-Band Rules

1. Eat only three main meals a day, plus two planned snacks.
2. Eat slowly, taking pea sized bites, and chew thoroughly until your food is a mushy consistency.
3. Stop eating as soon as you feel restriction from the band. This will feel different from the “full” sensation you had prior to your surgery.
4. Do not drink with meals, or for one full hour after eating.
5. Do not eat between meals, or planned snacks.
6. Eat a variety of high quality nutritional foods.
7. Consume recommended amounts of fiber daily.
8. Drink 64-100 ounces of non-caloric fluids between meals.
9. Do not drink carbonated beverages of any kind.
10. Exercise 30-60 minutes on most days.

The above band rules will assist in:

- A healthy weight loss (average of 1-2 pounds a week)
- Improved eating habits and lifestyle
- Ability to maintain your weight loss
- Improved nutrition and fitness level
- Avoidance of complications associated with proper use of the band

Bandster Nutrition

What kind of food should I eat?

There is a difference between a “good Bandster type meal” and what you have eaten in the past. You want to select foods that will keep you full longer. The best way to achieve this is by choosing solid protein sources, and fibrous vegetables, fruits, and grains sources. Soups are fine on occasion, but generally don’t keep you full very long. More solid proteins work best to keep you full longer.

You will find that you are unable to tolerate certain foods after banding that you have been able to eat before, due to the Lap-Bands restrictive function. For this reason you will need to take care when preparing and ordering foods. Foods that are dry or overcooked, breadly, gummy or very fibrous type foods will have trouble passing the small opening through the stoma.

What types of foods are best to eat?

The portion amounts vary depending on your calorie and nutrient needs. Serving suggestions are required minimums.

Good protein choices (5-8 oz)

- Soft high quality meat or pork loin (fat removed)
- Moist cooked chicken, turkey or most fowl (skin removed)
- Poached, sautéed, soft baked or BBQ fish (firm steak type fish may be harder to tolerate)
- Soft cooked, poached, scrambled or fried eggs, egg whites, or egg substitute
- Low-fat deli sliced ham, turkey, chicken or roast beef
- Low-fat, bean and meat chili

Fruits (2 servings)

- Melons- cantaloupe, honey dew, water melon
- Berries- strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, black berries, cranberries
- Tropical fruit- mango, papaya, kiwi, bananas
- Orchard fruit- baked/stewed or raw apples and pears (skins may need to be removed)

Vegetables (3 servings)

- Boiled/steamed or raw carrots
- Peas, cauliflower
- Broccoli heads
- Snap peas
- Red/green/yellow bell peppers
- Assorted peppers
- Onions

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- Garlic
- Mushrooms
- Assorted squash
- Eggplant
- Spinach/dark green leafy vegetables
- Assorted tomatoes

Grains (2-3 servings)

- Cooked- high fiber cereal (3+ grams per serving) low sugar
- Cold cereal- high fiber (3+ grams per serving) low-sugar
- Whole wheat crackers, toasted whole grain flat bread/pita, whole wheat flat pizza crust
- Soft cooked wild/brown rice, couscous, or quinoa

Dairy (2 servings)

- Non-fat/low-fat milk
- Non-fat/low-fat yogurt
- Non-fat/low-fat hard, soft and semi-soft cheese
- Calcium fortified soy, rice, or almond milk (low-fat)

Nuts and seeds (limited amounts- no more than 1 serving- Calorie dense)

- Low-sugar/sugar-free peanut butter
- Almond butter, cashew butter
- Low-salt/salt-free almonds, walnuts, pecans, peanuts
- Shelled sunflower seeds
- Ground flax seeds

Oils (limited amounts- very calorie dense)

Choose oils that are low in saturated fat.

- Canola oil
- Olive oil
- Soybean oil
- Flaxseed oil
- Sunflower oil
- Safflower oil
- Avocado
- Butter (limit)

Your body requires certain nutrients from food to maintain good health, such as fiber, calcium and iron. The following websites may be helpful in targeting foods with these essential nutrients.

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Good fiber foods:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-fiber-foods/NU00582>

<http://www.healthcastle.com/high-fiber-foods.shtml>

(Be sure to choose good band foods from among the different foods listed in these categories)

Good iron-containing foods:

http://www.sandiegobloodbank.org/donating_blood/iron_rich_foods.php

<http://www.mcgill.ca/studenthealth/information/nutritionalhealth/ironrich/>

Good Omega-3 oil foods, essential for heart health:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4632>

Calcium-rich foods:

<http://ag.arizona.edu/maricopa/fcs/bb/highCalciumFds.html>

<http://www.healthcastle.com/calcium.shtml>

<http://www.algaecal.com/calcium-foods.html>

What foods should I avoid?

There are certain foods that may cause problems for a banded patient and will slow, stop or can even result in you gaining back lost weight. The following foods should be avoided during the weight loss phase and limited to maintain weight loss.

Avoid fried/greasy food. Foods high in sugar: syrups, cakes, cookies, biscuits, pastries, sweets, candy, chocolate, honey, brown/white sugar, coffee creamer, jam, marmalade, pies, whole milk, butter/ margarine, full fat cheese, nuts in large amounts, alcohol/mixed drinks. These foods are very calorie dense, and provide you with little to no nutritional value.

Sample – Eating Pattern

Portion amounts vary depending on calorie level

| 10oz H ₂ O Before | 20oz H ₂ O Before | 20oz H ₂ O Before | 20 oz H ₂ O Before | 10oz H ₂ O Before |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Breakfast | Lunch | Snack | Dinner | Snack |
| 1 Serving Grain | 2 oz Protein | 1 Serving Fruit | 3 oz Protein | 1 Serving Dairy |
| 1 Serving Dairy | 1 Serving Grain | 1 oz Protein | 1 ½ Serving Veggies | |
| 1 Serving Fruit | 1 ½ Serving Veggies | | | |

Getting back on track

Making a lifelong commitment to a healthier lifestyle does not happen overnight? Even with a strong desire to change will come with some trial and error. Many Bandsters refer to the day they had surgery as the day they were reborn. In many ways this is very true. As a child, there were many things that took time to learn, reading, riding a bike even driving a car. Chances are you made some mistakes before you were able to accomplish all of these tasks. In the same way you will find that there are many new things you will have to relearn and letting go of the old ways can be a challenge. A mother would not expect her child to be perfect. You also must realize that the mistakes you make are part of the learning process that will lead you to success. Hopefully the information in this guide will limit the mistakes you make, and if you do, you can get back on track.

How do I get back on track after a PB or regurgitating episode?

At some point you will test the boundaries of your band and go too far. Don't despair it happens to everyone. A PB or regurgitating episode most likely will happen because you have not learned the signal to stop yet, and went too far before you realized it. And then it was too late. The good news is there is a pretty strong physical reminder when you make a mistake, and if it was unpleasant enough you most likely won't want to do that again. Or at least make every effort not to. Refer back to the section covering "soft stops" and "hard Stops" to acquaint yourself on the physical signs to stop eating. After an episode you will need to do some maintenance before you can eat solids again. Try these tips, and you should be back on track again.

Have nothing to eat for 1-2 hours after the incident as you have caused irritation and swelling to your stoma. After one or two hours try some warm clear liquid. This will have a soothing effect. Take small infrequent sips. For your next meal and possible the rest of the day (depending on the severity of the episode) drink only liquids. If this is going well, you may try soft foods for the next meal, and slowly reintroduce solid food again. You should be fine by the next day. Continued problems such as vomiting should be reported to Dr. Kuri.

Why have I stopped losing weight?

If you have lost a significant amount of weight, and have not lost any weight for three or more weeks, it's possible all you need is a fill to get you going again. But if you are still getting good restriction, a review or a change may be needed. When you are first banded most patients follow the band rules very closely. But often times as time goes on you may start to slip a little. If you are not losing weight review the band rules, they should be on your refrigerator. Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you eating three meals a day and two planned snacks?
- Do you only take 30 minutes to eat a meal?
- Are you being distracted when you are eating?
- Are you eating slowly, chewing your food completely?
- Are you drinking with your meals or too soon after you eat?
- Do you pick at food between meals? (A bite here, a bite there?)

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- Are you eating too many sweets?
- Are you drinking liquid calories? (coffee drinks, alcohol)
- Are you getting 30-60 minutes of exercise on most days?

Sometimes it's the smallest, most innocent little thing that can keep you from forward progress. Going back to the basics will usually get you back on track.

Easy or slider foods - Learning to take small mindful bites, and chew your food

This is the most important rule in my opinion. It is the foundation for everything else you do to live with the Lap-Band. If you do not learn to take small mindful bites, you will find that eating the kinds of foods you should to lose weight will be difficult to eat comfortably. Patients that don't learn this lesson start to eat "easy or slider foods," like soups and chili. These are foods that are easy to eat because they slide right down. The problem with slider foods is we have a tendency to over eat them. The purpose of the band is to keep you satisfied for longer periods of time on smaller amounts of food. Slider foods will not keep you satisfied as long, so you get hungry and over eat. Trust me, learn how to eat from the beginning, you don't want to put back weight that you worked hard to lose

How to eat small bites

Take a bite of your food about the size of the end of your little finger. As you place it in your mouth, move it around and chew, chew, chew until it is almost gone. Swallow and wait. It takes time for the food to reach the stoma and pass through. You may add tiny spoon/fork full with the same approach. Get used to using this technique, as you will need to slow down and think before you swallow your food for now on. If at any time you feel discomfort or a small burp, stop and try again later. Don't push it and keep eating. This doesn't help the food to go through faster. You simply have to stop and wait.

Why do I need to drink so much water?

Water is the most abundant substance in your body and as such is one of the most important. This is especially important when weight loss is occurring. The removal of fat from the body will have a dehydrating effect. When fats are broken down, by-products called ketone bodies are formed and spill into your blood. Ketone bodies can cause your blood to become slightly acidic.

To burn fat thoroughly you need some carbohydrate. This is why individuals who follow low carbohydrate diets are often in ketosis a condition of increased ketone bodies in the blood. Water replacement is essential for the removal of excessive ketone bodies in the blood and to prevent dehydration.

In addition when you are dehydrated you will find that the area around the band can get tight and make it difficult to eat comfortably. Keeping yourself hydrated will aid in keeping your band at the right restriction.

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It is recommended that you drink 64-100 ounces daily. Your water needs may increase during hot weather and extended exercise

Lifestyle and Fitness

Exercise

Being physically active is a key element in living a longer, healthier, happier life. It can help relieve stress and can provide an overall feeling of well-being. Physical activity can also help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight and lower risk for chronic disease. The benefits of physical activity may include:

- Improves self-esteem and feelings of well-being
- Increases fitness level
- Helps build and maintain bones, muscles, and joints
- Builds endurance and muscle strength
- Enhances flexibility and posture
- Helps manage weight
- Lowers risk of heart disease, colon cancer, and type 2 diabetes
- Helps control blood pressure
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety

Physical activity and nutrition work together for better health. Being active increases the amount of calories burned. As people age their metabolism slows, so maintaining energy balance requires moving more and eating less.

While 30 minutes a day of moderate intensity physical activities provide health benefits, being active for longer or doing more vigorous activities can provide even greater health benefits. If your goal in addition to weight loss is to improve your overall health, you may want to consider adding exercise to your daily routine.

What do I have to do to be successful with the band?

No matter how many food plans we try, healthy or unhealthy, there are some fundamental things you must know in order to be successful in a weight loss program that, believe it or not, have nothing to do with food.

1. Readiness- Are you ready to make change in your life right now?

In order to have true lifelong weight loss you have to commit to trading your old habits in for a new, healthier lifestyle. This has more to do with readiness for change than a desire to shed pounds- there is a big difference.

2. Developing a Vision

It is crucial to have another more, heart-felt reason to lose weight other than losing pounds and appearance. This is because when times are tough, and they will be during any change process, you will need a heart-felt or internal reason to lose the weight to keep you motivated.

3. Be Prepared For Change

All weight loss programs require us to change a habit yet no one warns us about the process of change. The first thing to know is that the beginning of change is difficult and uncomfortable. This is because it forces us to get off autopilot and focus on our new behaviors. Luckily it takes about 21 days to make a new habit and the uncomfortable part goes away and our new habits become autopilot.

In addition to those lifestyle changes, success with the band requires you to follow all of the recovery diet orders, follow all 10 of the Lap-Band rules.

Personal responsibility includes; follow up with fills when necessary, listen to your body, and use the band as a tool to your overall plan. Making better food choices and implementing a healthier lifestyle that includes daily activity. Be a self advocate for what you may need post surgery. Ask for support when you need it. We are here to help you with any need you may have.

Success after Lap-Band Surgery

What to Do and What Not to Do After LAP-BAND Surgery

You will be making many changes to your lifestyle after you have weight loss surgery, which will include following your surgeon's instructions to the letter. Check out these tips for success after Lap-Band surgery.

When to call your surgeon

- In the weeks after surgery, you should call your surgeon if:
- You develop a fever over 101 degree
- You develop a fever over 101degrees
- You have uncontrollable pain
- You cannot keep fluids down
- You are short of breath or have difficulty breathing
- You notice dark or tarry (bloody) stools
- You suddenly begin to bruise easily
- Your incisions begin to leak pus or bleed heavily
- You develop unexplainable severe leg pain

Don't drink calories.

Your caloric intake will be very limited after surgery, which should help you lose weight. Don't work against your surgery by taking in liquid calories that provide no nutrition and slow your weight loss. Make every calorie count by focusing on protein, fruits and vegetables.

Avoid sugar.

Sugar is the ultimate empty calorie. Sugar will make your blood sugar climb, cause hunger pangs, provide no nutrients. Limit sugar and any foods that list sugar in the first three ingredients, whenever possible.

No more carbonated drinks.

The bubbly nature of carbonated drinks, such as soda, can cause gas pain and increase the pressure in your stomach, which can be harmful to the band and sutures, especially in the months immediately after your surgery.

Don't drink fluids during or immediately after your meal. It is essential that you reserve the small amount of space you have in your stomach for high-quality, nutrient-rich food. Drinking during your meal will fill your stomach with fluid, instead of food, and drinking immediately after eating can "wash" food out of your stomach, making you feel hungry sooner. Separate food and fluid by at least an hour, whenever you can.

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Keep in touch with your Patient Facilitator.

After surgery, your progress will be closely monitored. Losing contact with your PF may mean that a complication or other issues may not be discovered in a timely manner. Also, working with your PF is a good way to stay motivated. She can help you to stay on track with your goals.

Don't stop taking any medications without your health care provider's approval.

Many diseases can improve with surgery and weight loss, but that doesn't mean you should stop taking your medication. Talk to your physician prior to stopping any medications.

Don't snack without planning.

Un-planned snacking is a habit that can slow your progress and hurt your long-term success. Stick to high-quality meals and avoid junk foods. If you are hungry, have a meal, and use strategic snacking to fill in nutritional requirements and curb hunger between meals.

Protein & fiber.

Protein and fiber should be your primary focus when sitting down for a meal. Not only will it help you maintain your muscle mass while losing fat, but it will also help you feel full longer after your meals.

Limit alcoholic drinks.

Alcohol is full of empty calories that provide no nutritional value. Weight loss surgery also makes you more sensitive to alcohol than you were before, so a little goes a long way.

Chew and then chew some more.

Chewing your food thoroughly is essential to preventing vomiting during and after your meal. Large chunks of food can have trouble passing through the Stoma. If food gets stuck it can cause pain, and complications down the road.

Avoid pregnancy for the first 24 months after surgery. Your body will be in high weight-loss mode for at least a year after your surgery. During that time, supporting you and a baby would be unhealthy for you and a developing fetus if you continued to diet. You may need to have all of your fill removed until after the baby is born. This will delay your weight loss. If you are sexually active, use a reliable method of birth control, and consult your surgeon before attempting to become pregnant.

Find a support group.

There are thousands of people having weight-loss surgery each year, so people who have walked in your shoes are not hard to find. Not only do support groups offer emotional support, but they can also provide advice on the wide range of changes you are facing as you lose weight. Support groups are available in most areas and are plentiful on the Internet. Dr. Kuri has provided a forum, where his patients can get the information they need and stay connected with other Lap-Band patients. The forum is a good place to start to find a support group in your area: <http://forum.lapbandsurgery.com/>

Consult your health care provider before you take over-the-counter drugs.

Over-the-counter drugs can pose risks after surgery that was not a concern prior to surgery. Pain relievers like ibuprofen and acetaminophen increase the likelihood that you will develop an ulcer. Remedies for constipation shouldn't be taken without physician approval, as constipation can be a sign of complications or a need for a change in diet.

Listen to your body.

Don't eat if you aren't hungry. Learn to listen to your smaller stomach. You should feel satisfied after eating, not stuffed. Learn to tell the difference.

Avoid simple carbs.

Simple carbohydrates are highly processed foods such as white bread, pasta, sugar and white rice. The rule of thumb is this if it is white; it may be a simple carb. You are better off with more wholesome alternatives such as brown rice that contain fiber and nutrients that white rice does not. Simple carbohydrates can also elevate blood glucose levels, triggering hunger pangs and cravings.

Exercise.

From the moment you are able to after surgery, exercise. Even if you can't walk far or for very long, get started. Your results will be better, and you will be encouraged by how quickly your stamina improves as the pounds shed.

Eat mindfully. No more eating while watching television. Focus on what you are doing when you eat, and stop the moment you feel full. Giving food your full attention will help you learn to say when and develop new healthier habits.

Stay hydrated.

Drink lots of water. This will help you feel more energetic, and it will prevent you from mistaking hunger for thirst. Staying hydrated will help your band work more efficiently, and will remove waste from the body and aid in weight loss.

Surgery won't fix your life.

Remember that surgery is a way to lose weight, but it is not a miracle fix for every problem in your life. Being thin won't make your children clean their room without being asked, it won't fix a bad marriage. Be realistic in your expectations of life after surgery.

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Find healthful coping skills.

If you need Lap-Band surgery, the chances are high that you used food as a coping mechanism for stress. Find new ways to cope. Whether it is exercise like yoga, or finding some quiet time and reading a book, whatever works for you other than eating.

Restaurant meals and doggy bags.

Restaurant portions are going to be massive in comparison to your needs after surgery. Plan on taking food home or ordering a child's portion or off the appetizer menu. Or even spit a meal with your dining companion. If you aren't sure you can resist joining the clean plate club, divide an acceptable portion away from the meal and have the server remove the rest before temptation sets in.