

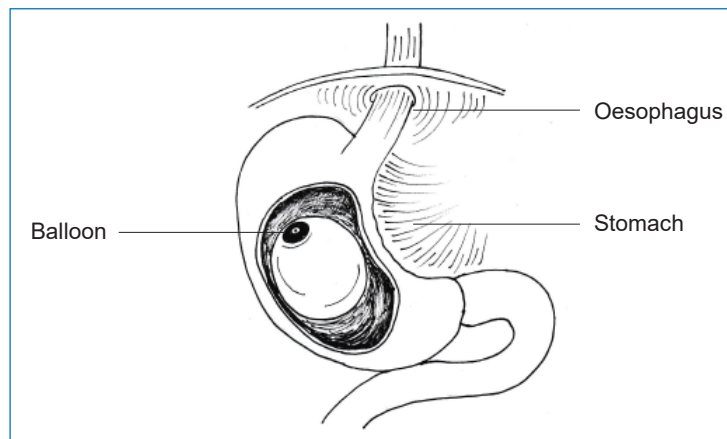
# Your Diet Following Gastric Balloon Placement

## How a gastric balloon works

The intragastric balloon procedure is recommended for people who need to lose weight before having a weight-loss operation, to reduce their surgical risk, or who can't have surgery for health reasons.

You will be given a sedative during the procedure. A deflated soft silicone balloon is placed into the mouth, down your oesophagus (food pipe) and into your stomach endoscopically. The balloon is then filled with 500-600mls of a blue liquid called Methylene Blue. The filled intragastric balloon is designed to partially fill your stomach, giving you a feeling of fullness. This will help you to change your eating patterns, reduce the volume of food eaten and make you feel fuller quicker.

The balloon is designed to stay in place for a maximum of twelve months, after which it must be removed by our team the same way that it was placed. It will be punctured and the deflated balloon will be retrieved and removed endoscopically. Three days prior to the removal you will revert to a semi-liquid diet. The day before you must consume liquids only.



## What happens on the day of the procedure?

You will attend the Day Surgery Unit (DSU) at HRI at 7am where the surgeon and anaesthetist will talk to you about the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form. The procedure will take place in the operating theatres. After the gastric balloon insertion, you will usually be transferred to Ward 10 where you will stay overnight. Once you are able to tolerate sips of fluids without vomiting, you will usually be allowed to go home.

You will be discharged home with anti-sickness and anti-acid medications. You will need to continue the anti-acid tablets for the duration that the balloon is in place.

We also advise you take an A-Z multivitamin and a Vitamin D supplement 10mcg once a day whilst you have the balloon in place.

You will be provided with a blood form on discharge and asked to have these taken 4-7 days after the balloon insertion.

You will be followed up over the telephone 7 days after your balloon insertion by the Bariatric Nurse and will be seen face to face after 4-6 weeks in clinic by our Specialist Nurse or Specialist Dietitians. You will be sent regular outpatient appointments with the Bariatric team which you will be expected to attend in person.

### **Weight loss occurs due to dietary and lifestyle changes. A few weeks after surgery you will need to be doing the following:**

- Eating 3 small, healthy, low calorie meals a day including breakfast.
- Avoid snacking on high calorie foods and drinks as much as possible.
- Eating at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Being physically active for at least 30 minutes a day.
- Being consistent with your eating. This means eating regularly and making good food choices.

We offer you regular review and support from the Bariatric Dietitian/Nurse after the balloon is placed to help you lose weight healthily and steadily. You need to be able to commit to this if your surgeon is going to operate on you in the future.

### **What changes to my eating should I expect?**

For the first few days, as your stomach adjusts to the balloon, you'll almost certainly feel uncomfortable. You may experience nausea, vomiting, bloating, diarrhoea and cramping. These side-effects are temporary and normal.

While the balloon is in situ, you will require a course of oral medication to reduce your stomach acid. This may reduce the possibility of stomach irritation and damage to the balloon. You will be prescribed this medication and also an anti-sickness medication to be taken for the first few days and until you no longer feel nauseous.

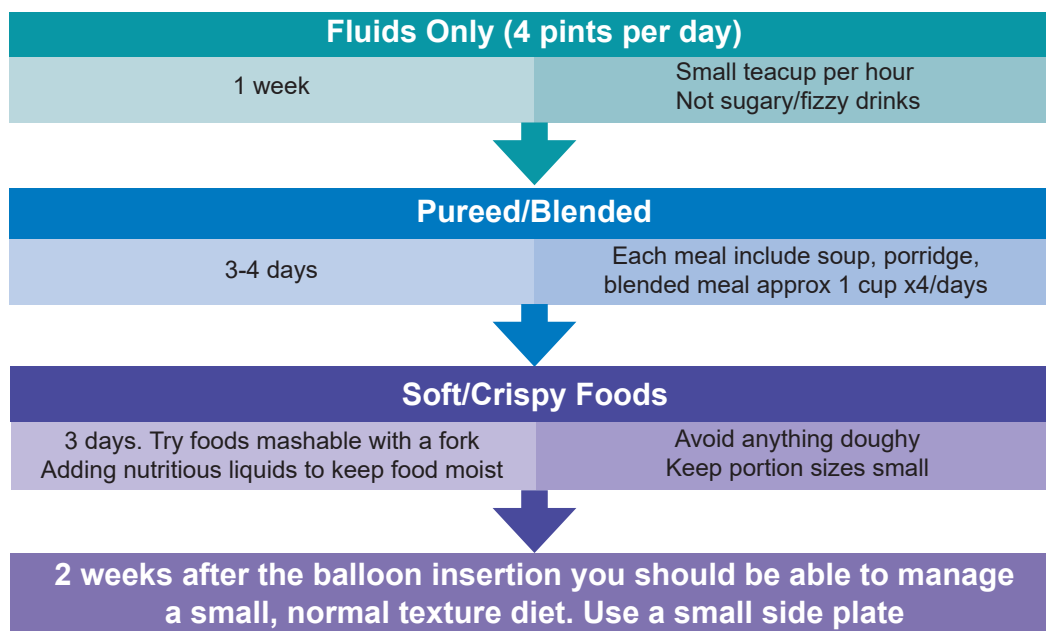
Initially you will be advised to commence fluids and remain on 'fluids only' for 1 week. The fluids you chose must not be sugary or fizzy. After the liquid phase everything will need to be puréed or blended for 3-4 days. At the next stage you will be able to have small amounts of soft, mashed foods.

Two weeks after the balloon has been inserted, most people will be able to start having more normal texture foods and may be able to manage a small plate of food. Everyone is different so this may take longer in some cases.

Do not be tempted to move between stages too quickly as your stomach needs time to get used to the balloon being in place. The following pages are a general guide only. You will be advised on the type of food and quantities to eat as part of your on-going care with the dietitian.

**Important note:** A blue dye is added to the saline that is injected into the balloon, so that in the rare event that the balloon leaks, you would know immediately by the change in colour of your urine from yellow to green. If this happens please contact your surgical team immediately so that the balloon can be safely removed.

## Diet Stages Following Insertion of Intra-gastric Balloon



For more information about each diet stage, please see the following pages.

### Stage 1: Starting on fluids

- **You must keep to fluids only for the first week after surgery.**
- All drinks should be smooth (with no bits or lumps) eg. Protein shake, skimmed milk, strained low fat vegetable soup, low fat yoghurt drink, low fat clear broth or soup, weak tea or coffee (preferably decaffeinated).
- Sip drinks slowly; start with a maximum of 200 mls/hour (a small teacup). Once this feels comfortable you can build up the quantity. Be careful not to gulp as this may result in nausea or vomiting. Do not overstretch your stomach by drinking a lot at once – a glass or cupful at a time is enough.
- Aim to have 2½ litres (4 pints) each day to prevent dehydration. At least 1.7 litres of this (3 pints) should be nutritious drinks (see below for details) so you do not become malnourished.
- You can flavour milk with coffee or no added sugar milkshake syrups; ask your dietitian for more information
- You will always need to avoid fizzy drinks as they may cause stretching and discomfort.
- Take a complete multivitamin and mineral supplement plus a vitamin D supplement each day. A supermarket/chemist own brand is sufficient.
- If you are struggling with the volume or have a lactose intolerance, please speak with your dietitian.

Nutritious drinks (1 - 1.7 litres / 3 pints)	Other drinks allowed (½ litre / 1 pint)
Milk eg. semi-skimmed, skimmed or 1%	No added sugar squash or cordial
Yoghurt drinks; eg. pouring yoghurt / probiotic drinks	Still water, flavoured if preferred (no added sugar)
Meal replacement shake eg. SlimFast HP, Celebrity Slim or Supermarket own version	Oxo / Bovril / Marmite drinks
Meal replacement soup eg. Celebrity slim soups The biggest Loser soups or Supermarket own version	Thin, smooth soup eg. cream of tomato
Low fat evaporated milk (dilute with half water)	Tea / coffee - no sugar
Soup (add 2 tablespoons skimmed milk powder to every 200mls (½ tin)	Fruit juice (not more than one small 200ml glass per day)

## Stage 2: Introducing puree foods

### You must follow this stage for 3-4 days

You will need to gradually move from liquids only to blended or pureed foods. The texture should be smooth like yoghurt and pour off a spoon so that lumps of food don't get stuck. Use a blender or food processor to get the right texture.

- Take very small amounts (5-6 teaspoons) of pureed food per meal for the first few days. It can be difficult to puree small amounts so try freezing leftovers in small containers for later use.
- Use nutritious liquids to add to food for blending such as milk, yoghurt, milk or cheese based sauces. Instant or powdered soups may seem easy, but they provide very little in the way of nutrients so try not to waste filling your stomach on these – you need the maximum amount of nutrients from everything you eat.
- Aim to eat 4-6 meals per day at this stage and only increase the amounts when you can do so comfortably – ask your dietitian if you are unsure about this.
- It can be difficult to take enough protein which is essential for general health and healing. Include high protein foods and drinks such as meat, chicken, fish, milk, eggs, yoghurt, cheese at every meal.
- Stop eating **before** you feel full. You will be surprised how just one spoonful more than you need, can make you feel discomfort.
- Keep drinks to between meals only and allow at least 30 minutes either side of food before drinking.
- **Drink 1 glass of water 30 minutes before each meal and 2 glasses of water 30 minutes after to 'rinse' the balloon.**
- Sip drinks; use a sport lid if necessary, and try to have about 2 litres (3½ pints) each day. It is very important to take half of this as milk – you will need the protein it provides for now. i.e. drink 0.5-1 litre (1-2 pints) of milk each day.
- Avoid all sugary or fizzy drinks.
- Take a complete multivitamin and mineral supplement and vitamin D supplement every day. These can be bought from the supermarket/chemist.
- Add herbs to add flavour to your food as a puree diet can be very bland.
- Remember to follow the 20:20:20:20 rule.

#### The 20:20:20:20 rule

- Chew every mouthful of food 20 times.
- Put cutlery down for 20 seconds between mouthfuls.
- Take about 20 minutes to eat a meal.
- Don't take more than 20 pence piece sized mouthfuls.

## Meal suggestions for pureed stage

### Breakfast

½ Weetabix with lots of milk

**or**

Instant oat cereal

**or**

½ banana blended with low sugar yoghurt

### Mid-morning

Glass of milk or 2-3 teaspoons of pureed fruit or small pot low sugar yoghurt

**or**

Small bowl of low sugar instant whip made with milk

**or**

Homemade fruit smoothie (1 x fruit + milk + sweetener to taste)

### Lunch

2-3 teaspoons fish/minced meat/minced chicken/casseroled meat/casseroled chicken/curried meat/  
curried chicken + 2-3 teaspoons smooth mashed potato + vegetables blended with cheese sauce

**or**

2-3 teaspoons smooth mash or rice or pasta + vegetables blended with gravy or sauce/

2-3 teaspoons cauliflower cheese blended with 2-3 teaspoons smooth mashed potato/

2-3 teaspoons dhal blended with 2-3 teaspoons plain yoghurt

or small bowl smooth soup blended with extra vegetables

### Mid-afternoon

As mid-morning

### Evening meal

As lunch

### Supper

Glass of milk

**or**

Low sugar yoghurt or cereal as at breakfast

## Stage 3: Introducing soft & crispy foods

**Start with soft foods:** Try foods which are mashable with a fork. You will still need to add nutritious liquids as before so food stays moist. Aim for the texture of shepherd's pie or dhal.

- Remember the 20:20:20:20 rule
- Keep portion sizes small and remember to stop before you feel full.
- Try not to have more than a starter size or tea plate portion for each meal.
- Eat three starter or tea plate sized meals a day with two low fat/low sugar snacks such as fruit, yoghurt or milk.
- Always eat the protein part of the meal first .

**Drink 1 glass of water 30 minutes before each meal and 2 glasses of water 30 minutes after to 'rinse' the balloon.**

**Building in crispy foods:** Once you can comfortably manage soft foods, try adding crispy things such as crisp breads, crackers, bread sticks, very crispy toast. Avoid anything doughy such as bread or chapattis as these can stick to the balloon. You can gradually start to include the 'caution foods'.

- Continue to drink between meals only and avoid sugary or fizzy drinks as before. Still aim for about 2 litres (3½ pints) each day.
- As your intake of protein-rich foods is increasing, reduce your intake of milk to ½litre (1 pint) a day. Remember to replace any milk with other fluids.
- Avoid snacking on foods high in fat or sugar such as crisps, biscuits, sweets, chocolate or savoury snacks.

## Meal suggestions for soft and crispy stage

### Breakfast

Porridge

**or**

Cereal and milk (avoid nuts and dried fruit)

**or**

Low sugar yoghurt with soft fruit

### Lunch

Tinned or wafer thin meat + soft salad vegetables such as skinless cucumber, beetroot and roasted peppers with low fat dressing + breadsticks

**or**

Baked beans on crispy toast

**or**

Low fat cheese or pate with crispbreads + tomato + cucumber

**or**

Chunky soup with extra vegetables and lentils, minced meat, minced chicken, yoghurt or grated cheese

### Mid- afternoon

Soft fruit or glass milk or low sugar yoghurt/fromage frais

### Evening meal

Spaghetti bolognaise (include plenty of vegetables as well as mince in sauce)

**or**

Flesh from baked potato mashed with tuna and milk + soft salad vegetables

**or**

Very tender curry or chilli with rice (do not overcook) + soft salad vegetables

**or**

Dhal and plain yoghurt

**or**

Cheese omelette + peas + breadsticks

**or**

Fish in parsley sauce

**or**

Small portion healthy eating ready meal

### Supper

As mid-morning or 1-2 crackers with low fat cheese or cereal

Continue taking your daily vitamin and mineral supplement

## Stage 4: Introducing 'Normal Texture' Foods and Beyond

Two weeks after your gastric balloon has been inserted, most people find that they can manage 'normal texture' foods, but this will vary from person to person. Don't worry if you are not quite ready yet.

### Tips:

- Continue to eat soft foods as before and gradually introduce small amounts of normal texture foods as well.
- Chew food very well and take your time – remember the '20:20:20:20 rule'.
- Continue to leave at least 30 minutes between eating and drinking.
- Remember to stop eating **before** you feel full to avoid discomfort/vomiting.
- Sit at the table to eat. Do not eat whilst doing other things such as watching TV or reading. You will be much more aware of how much you are eating if you are not distracted.
- Eat regularly - skipping meals is an easy way to **gain** weight as your hunger levels may be increased later in the day.
- Aim to eat 3 meals a day and work towards a maximum of a *small* dinner plate per meal. Once you are able to manage this amount you should no longer need snacks. If you are still hungry add more vegetables or salad to meals and have fruit or yoghurt as a healthy snack.
- If you are eating well and managing plenty of high protein foods at each meal then it will no longer be necessary to include extra milky drinks.

**Drink 1 glass of water 30 minutes before each meal and 2 glasses of water 30 minutes after to 'rinse' the balloon. You will need to do this for as long as the balloon remains in place.**

### Foods to avoid

- Fried meat
- High-fat processed meats, such as sausage, salami, corned beef and bacon.
- Bagels and doughy breads. Waffles, pancakes and croissants. High fat cream soups. Pasta may not be tolerated.
- Butter, oil (unless olive oil). Regular margarine mayonnaise and some dressings.
- Sweets and pastries. Ice cream, salty snacks



## Healthy Eating Tips for Life

- At meals fill ½ a small plate with lean protein (such as meat, fish, poultry, eggs, low-fat cheese, pulses and lentils), ¼ with vegetables or salad, and ¼ with starchy carbohydrates (such as rice, pasta, potatoes or couscous). Ideally choose wholemeal varieties as they have more fibre.
- Always eat the protein part of your meal first, then fruit or vegetables and finally the starchy carbs.
- Remember the 20:20:20:20 rule.
- Take your vitamins and mineral tablet daily as advised.

## Weight Maintenance Tips for Life

- **Plan** your meals a week in advance and only buy food that you want to eat. Use healthy recipe books for inspiration.
- Periodically record what you eat and drink in a journal, app or website such as myfitnesspal (free), Nutracheck (cost involved) or weightlossresource.co.uk (cost involved) as a reminder of what you are eating during the day.
- Introduce an exercise routine and generally more active lifestyle into your day. Start slowly as overdoing it in the beginning could cause injury and set you back in achieving your overall goals. Aim for 30 minutes of activity daily to begin with. Track your activity levels either in a diary or app; aim to increase this weekly or monthly.
- Only eat until the point of fullness and not beyond.
- Try to eat at the table or without distraction, so you can 'mindfully' eat your meal.
- Do not let high fat and high sugar foods such as chocolate, biscuits, crisps and sweets creep into your diet. These are just as 'fattening' after the operation as they were before. If you have these foods too often you will stop losing weight and could end up having a very unhealthy diet.

## Frequently asked questions

### Why should I stop eating before I feel full?

It takes around 20 minutes for the brain to recognise 'I'm full' messages from the stomach. You will need to learn this. There is a difference between eating to stop hunger and eating until full. If you eat until you are aware of feeling full you have had too much. This could cause you discomfort and even to vomit.

### Is it normal to be sick or feel sick a lot?

**Although a common side effect in the first few days, you shouldn't expect to be sick. If you are sick or feel sick frequently, do you:**

- Eat slowly?
- Chew food well?
- Eat the right texture food for your stage post-balloon?
- Stop eating before you feel full?
- Eat and drink separately?
- Take your anti-acid medication every day?

## Tips to prevent you from being sick

- Avoid any foods that you know cause you a problem for the time being.
- Eat regularly. If having a cracker helps the nausea it could be that you need to eat more frequently so include a healthy snack such as fruit between meals.
- Remember the 20:20:20:20 rule

If you experience **prolonged vomiting** please purchase or contact your GP surgery to consider prescribing Thiamine 300mg daily.

B vitamins are not usually stored in the body, so levels can become quickly depleted. Symptoms of thiamine deficiency include; confusion, neuropathy (damage to the nerves), poor coordination (stumbling, falling), slurred speech and a rapid heart rate (tachycardia).

## I've got diarrhoea or constipation. What can I do?

**Diarrhoea:** You may experience diarrhoea in the first few days as your stomach adjusts to the balloon. If it is frequent and concerning you, please contact your GP.

**Constipation:** Your bowels are likely to move less often as you will be eating less. However, if you have signs of constipation such as not opening bowels for a number of days, bloating, and difficulty passing stools; it may be that you are not eating enough fibre or drinking enough fluid.

- Aim for a minimum of eight glasses of fluid a day.
- Include more fruit, vegetables, salad, pulses and wholegrain cereals as soon as possible and gradually increase the amounts of these foods. Linseeds can also work to soften stools. You can find them in most supermarkets.
- Try a stool softener such as senna or lactulose. Ask your pharmacist for advice on dose. Some laxatives are available to buy at supermarkets or pharmacies.
- If constipation continues see your doctor.

## My hair is falling out, what's wrong?

Some people notice their hair thinning a few months after balloon placement. The cause of this is not always known. It can be due to rapid weight loss or nutritional deficiencies. Make sure you are eating as healthily as you can and be certain you are taking the recommended vitamin and mineral supplement every day. Your surgeon or doctor may want to do some blood tests but these often turn out to be normal. Try not to worry. For most people hair loss stops after a few months and then starts to re-grow.

## Can I drink alcohol?

**After a few months your stomach should be able to tolerate a small amount of alcohol but remember:**

- Alcohol provides a lot of calories so drinking more than occasional small amounts will mean you will lose less weight. In any case, never exceed the maximum daily safe limits for health of 2-3 units of alcohol for women and 3-4 units for men with at least 2 alcohol free days a week.
- Alcohol can make you hungry so you are more likely to snack, especially on high calorie foods.
- Avoid sugary or fizzy mixers and fizzy alcoholic drinks.

## What about taking my medications?

After the balloon has been placed in your stomach, you can continue to take your prescribed medications as you normally would. Take your tablets with at least 100mls of water. Liquid/crushable medications are not necessary but are suitable to take.

**If any of the things mentioned in this booklet concern you or you would like further advice, speak with your dietitian or surgical team.**

### Local bariatric support group

Usually runs the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00-8:00pm. Everybody welcome. Please phone 01484 355217 to book.

### Weight Loss Surgery Info Website

[www.wlsinfo.org.uk](http://www.wlsinfo.org.uk)

**If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :**

Bariatric Surgery Department  
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust

Telephone: 01484 355217  
Email: [bariatric@cht.nhs.uk](mailto:bariatric@cht.nhs.uk)

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://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, obraťte se prosím 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

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اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ کی زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو  
برائے 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"