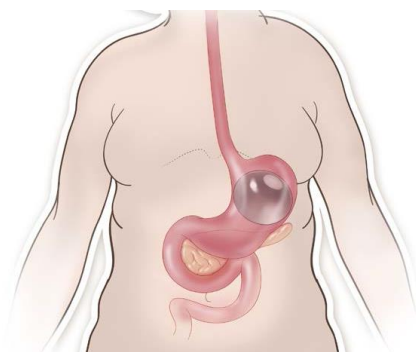


Specialist Weight Management Service

Dietary advice for patients following a Gastric balloon insertion

This information should only be used by patients who have had a Gastric balloon and should only be followed with supervision and support from a Bariatric Dietitian/Nurse.



What is a gastric balloon?

A gastric balloon is a soft silicone balloon that is designed to partially fill your stomach, giving you a feeling of fullness. It should help you to feel less hungry but also feel fuller more quickly after small meals.

The balloon alone will not make you lose weight. Losing weight will be the result of the positive dietary changes that you make. Choosing healthy nutritious foods in small quantities will work with the balloon to help your weight to reduce.

The first few days following insertion of the gastric balloon can be challenging. As the stomach adjusts to the balloon you will almost certainly feel uncomfortable, and experiences of nausea, vomiting, and cramping are



Patient Information

common. These side effects are usually temporary and normal. You will be prescribed medication to help manage them. Once at home you will be asked to follow a special diet until the nausea and vomiting has settled.

After the procedure

When the procedure has finished, the nursing staff will monitor you and ask you to start having small sips of water.

You may feel a little groggy and forgetful but this will soon wear off. You might feel quite thirsty and may have a dry mouth but it is important not to drink quickly and gulp as you will be sick and might experience pain.

Start with drinking some water from a TEASPOON. Sip the fluid one spoon at a time and stop if you feel any pain. Slowly increase the amount of fluid that you are able to take. If you get very thirsty in the hospital tell your Nurse. If you get thirsty at home make sure you keep sipping little and often and try sucking an ice lolly or ice cube.

When the nursing staff are happy you have recovered from the procedure you will be allowed to go home. You will not be able to drive so please ensure you have someone who can collect you.

Days 1 – 3 Thin liquid Diet

For the first few days, please ensure that you have a thin **liquid** diet. This helps your body to adapt to the balloon. However, it is hard to meet your body's requirements when you are only consuming liquids. It is therefore important to ensure, that the liquids you do have, provide nutrients for your body. All fluids should be **completely smooth** with **no lumps, bits or solids**. The fluids should be thin enough to pass through a straw. Try drinking the following liquids:

- Water
- Low calorie fruit squash
- Diluted apple juice
- Weak tea or coffee
- Clear soup or broth
- Sugar-free jelly

Patient Information

- Low fat/low sugar yoghurt drinks
- Milk (semi-skimmed, skimmed or 1%) – aim for 1 pint per day
- Flavoured sugar-free water

Remember:

- Sip drinks SLOWLY. You might find it helpful to carry a sports bottle around with you. Little and often is important to ensure that you stay well hydrated
- If your urine is dark you need to drink more fluid. It should be a pale straw colour
- Do not drink carbonated/fizzy drinks, which can cause gas and bloating
- Drink at least 8 cups of fluid per day. Drinking liquids keeps you from becoming dehydrated and constipated. Start by taking small sips. Wait a minute or two between sips. Slowly take more with each sip. Drink only 1/3 cup at a time
- Do not drink more than one cup of coffee or caffeine drinks per day. Caffeine can cause you to become dehydrated. It can cause cramps or diarrhoea
- Sit upright for 3 to 4 hours after drinking. If resting, use a recliner rather than lying flat

Days 4-7

Continue to have the drinks mentioned above but now try to introduce:

- Soup with blended protein such as chicken/fish/meat/pulses. If thick, please dilute with milk until a liquid consistency. Or add 2 tablespoons of dried milk powder. Please ensure any lumps are removed by blending
- Build-up or Complan soup and drinks (no lumps or bits)
- Slimfast
- Ovaltine/Horlicks made with semi-skimmed milk
- Milkshake (not too sweet)
- Low fat/low sugar yoghurt with no bits
- Thin custard
- Fruit and yoghurt smoothies

Patient Information

Days 8-14 Pureed diet

Your stomach is starting to adapt to the gastric balloon. You might still experience nausea, bloating and stomach cramps but this should be easing off by now. At this stage, we gradually move from liquids to **pureed foods**. Aim to have foods that are the consistency of smooth thick porridge. Use a blender or liquidizer to puree your food. This needs to be a SLOW progression and remember to:

EAT SLOWLY and **CHEW WELL**

Each meal should take about 15 to 20 minutes, but no longer than 30 minutes to eat.

Continue to drink at least 8 cups of fluid per day.

Pay close attention to how you feel before, during, and after meals. Stop eating as soon as you feel full or have any discomfort at the breastbone (front centre of the chest). This means that you may not need to eat everything on your plate.

Suggestions:

- Pureed fruit/mashed banana (stewed or canned in natural juice may be easier to puree)
- Cottage cheese
- Porridge
- Lentil dahl
- High protein soup made with chicken/meat/beans or lentils
- Pureed bean and vegetable casserole
- Pureed chilli con carne with pureed pasta
- Pureed beef bolognese with pureed pasta
- Pureed vegetable chilli with mashed potato
- Pureed macaroni cheese and pureed vegetables
- Pureed beef/chicken/turkey/lamb or lean minced meat with vegetables and pureed rice/pasta/ potato
- Pureed fish in parsley/white sauce with smooth mashed potato and pureed vegetables

Patient Information

- Pureed tinned mackerel or sardines in tomato sauce with smooth mashed potato and pureed vegetables

Foods to avoid at this pureed stage:

- All solid foods
- Tough skin on food (such as tomato, sausage)
- Sweetcorn
- Foods with seeds
- Bacon and meat with 'gristle' and meat that has not been pureed
- Hard cheese
- Potato skins
- Toast, bread

Days 15-21 Soft diet

You can start to introduce more foods and different textures to your diet at this stage. However, choose nutritious foods to provide the nutrients your body needs. Please use a fork to ensure your food is a soft or mashed texture.

Suggestions:

- Weetabix, porridge or Ready Brek – all soaked until mushy
- Mashed potato, sweet potato or yam
- Soft cooked pasta with a sauce (preferably tomato) or well cooked rice
- Mashed vegetables (such as carrots, parsnips)
- Minced chicken or meat or flaked fish with a sauce/gravy
- Scrambled egg or soft omelette
- Cottage cheese or grated reduced fat cheese
- Pulses such as mashed baked beans, chick peas, kidney beans
- Soft fruit or tinned fruit in natural juice
- Yoghurt (low fat or diet versions)
- Custard
- One to two breadsticks, crisp breads, crackers

Patient Information

Foods to avoid at this soft textured stage:

- Any food with a tough skin or pith such as sausages, tomato, apple, plums, oranges or bacon.
- Stringy or fibrous vegetables such as celery, asparagus, or sweetcorn, green beans, mushrooms etc.

Day 22 onwards

Return to a normal balanced diet. If you are tolerating pureed food and fluids well, then you can return to a normal textured diet, though with caution. Note that some foods have a tendency to stick to the balloon and can cause very unpleasant 'burps'. You may find pasta a particular problem. It is generally advisable to sip fizzy water shortly after a meal to rinse off the balloon.

If you have trouble with persistent nausea or vomiting after eating then it is advisable to return to a liquid or soft diet for a few meals rather than missing a meal completely. Aim for at least three healthy meals of an appropriate quantity each day.

Suggestions:

Breakfast:

120ml of unsweetened fruit juice, plus:

High fibre cereal (such as 1 Weetabix or 3 tablespoons of porridge) with 150ml (¼ pint) semi or skimmed milk or

1 slice toast with low fat spread and topping – reduced sugar jam/marmite

Mid-morning:

Sugar free drink

Lunch:

60g (2 ounces) of lean meat, chicken, fish, lentils, baked beans or eggs, plus:

1 slice bread or 1-2 tablespoons of well cooked rice or 1-2 tablespoons of mashed potato or 1-2 small boiled potatoes, plus

2 tablespoons vegetables or salad

Include 1 portion fruit or low fat yoghurt or a small glass of semi skimmed milk

Patient Information

Mid-afternoon:

Sugar free drink

Dinner:

60g (2 ounces) of lean meat, chicken, fish, lentils, baked beans or eggs, plus:

1 slice bread or 1-2 tablespoons well cooked rice or 1-2 tablespoons instant potato or 1-2 small boiled potatoes, plus:

2 tablespoons vegetables or salad

1 portion fruit or low fat yoghurt - optional

Supper:

Sugar free drink

Fluid:

Aim for 2 litres of fluid per day. This includes any fluid such as water, juices, milk, squash and soups. Weak tea and coffee are also allowed though should not be your main source of fluids. You should avoid drinks with too much gas. Fizzy drinks can cause a great deal of discomfort with a gastric balloon.

General tips

- Go slowly, take small sips/mouthfuls
- Wait between sips for a minute or two
- Wait for approximately 10mins between drinks
- Stop drinking/eating as soon as you feel full
- Avoid drinking too soon after a meal
- Aim to eat protein and vegetables first. Choose a variety of healthy and nutritious foods but eat small portions.
- Bread, rice and pasta can stick to the top of the balloon which may cause your breath to become smelly. If this is a problem, please have a drink of fizzy water.
- Once you have swallowed, start to pick up the next mouthful from your plate

Patient Information

- Stop as soon as you feel satisfied, not over-full. This can cause pain and discomfort and may make you vomit
- Sit down for each meal and allow 20-30 minutes
- Avoid alcohol as this can irritate the stomach
- Avoid lying down shortly after eating and wait at least two hours before going to bed. Some discomfort may occur when trying to sleep or lying on your side, this can be expected and can be eased by propping yourself up with pillows.
- Exercise, or at least walk for 15 to 30 minutes or more daily.

Supplements

It is important that you take a complete multivitamin and mineral supplement with Iron and a **separate** Calcium and Vitamin D supplement as it is more difficult to meet your requirements following insertion of the balloon. By taking multivitamin and mineral supplements, nutritional deficiencies such as iron, folate, vitamin D, and calcium deficiencies can be prevented. The following are suitable options:

- Forceval
- Tesco A-Z multivitamin and mineral
- Centrum Advance (need additional Iron)
- Holland and Barrett ABC plus

Remember to take the supplements at separate times. For example, take multivitamins in the morning and Calcium and Vitamin D supplements in the evening.

Removal of the balloon

The procedure is very similar to the placement process. The balloon should be removed within 12 months. Once the balloon has been removed it is very important to continue to keep a positive and healthy mind-set while achieving your weight loss goals. Maintaining the healthy lifestyle choices you have established will help you continue to lose weight and keep it off.

Frequently asked questions

How much weight will I lose?

Your success depends on whether you make the necessary dietary adjustments or how well you apply them. You can experience up to 20kg or three stone of weight loss, though some people lose none.

Will I be able to feel the gastric balloon in my stomach?

There is often some discomfort during the first few days. After that, the primary sensation is feeling satisfied or full after eating or drinking.

Are there side effects or complications with the gastric balloon?

The first week or two can be difficult. Cramping, nausea and vomiting are common symptoms though generally not harmful. If you have persistent problems then follow the guidance of your Dietitian and ensure to drink at least 2L of fluids.

Can I drink alcohol?

Although alcohol consumption in moderation will not affect your gastric balloon, it may cause heartburn. It is important to limit as the extra calories won't help your weight-loss!

What about constipation?

This can occur especially in the initial stages as you are eating less than normal and also have less fibre in your diet. Symptoms include: hard stools, feeling full and potentially nausea. Please ensure that you drink plenty of fluids, increase your fibre when possible and are active. If you experience discomfort, you can take laxatives, although we would wish to know if this continues to be a major problem.

Remember sometimes a food is not tolerated just because you have not chewed well.

Patient Information

Physical Activity

To maintain heart health you should aim to be moderately active (heart rate is raised but you can still talk) for 30 minutes, five times a week. To lose and maintain weight loss you need to increase this to 1 to 1½ hours every day. This means where possible taking the stairs, walking instead of driving, doing more house-hold chores and most importantly reducing the amount of time you spend sitting, for example watching the television. You could make a conscious decision to reduce television, or computer games by one hour per day and do a job around the house instead.

Potential post-procedure complications

As with all procedures there is a small chance of complications. The risk of these is assessed on an individual basis depending upon each patient's fitness and this should be discussed with your surgeon prior to the day of your operation. Overall, this is a very safe procedure but you should be aware that there is a small possibility of:

- Intolerance to gastric balloon- crampy stomach pain, nausea and vomiting, commonly occurs in the first few weeks and requires slow progression with drinking and eating and taking the prescribed anti-sickness medication
- Perforation/leakage of gastric balloon- rarely occurs but has blue dye, therefore it is recognised by blue/green in the urine/vomit/stools and it will be required to be removed.
- Risk of stomach ulcer- is rare but can be caused from irritation of the balloon and stomach wall, drink fluids and eat a small amount of food regularly ensure you take the prescribed Omeprazole (PPI) medication
- Risk of injury to food pipe and stomach and bleeding is rare but can occur from the endoscope

What if I have any problems at home?

If you experience any of the following problems whilst you are at home please contact the Surgical Admissions Unit (SAU) ward 22 on 024 7696 6186 immediately:

- Persistent vomiting
- Increased pain, not relieved by medication
- Fever (39°C+)
- Reluctance to drink/dehydration

Patient Information

- Difficulty passing urine
- Persistent cough or shortness of breath

For all other problems and queries, including medication, sick notes, wound and chest problems, please contact your own GP.

Further information can be obtained from

British Dietetic Association www.bda.uk.com

BOSPA. British Obesity Society Patient Association <http://www.bospa.org/>

Weight loss surgery information <http://www.wlsinfo.org.uk/>

This is a free member's site where you can get support and information about surgery

Please tell us about your experiences from your stay

We are committed to improving our services and would like to hear your experiences about your stay with us. If you would like to offer any comments – compliments or complaints – regarding our services at the hospital please use this web link: www.uhcw.nhs.uk/contact-us. You can also write to us or telephone us: Tel. 024 7696 4000

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 76966155 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

Department:	General Surgery
Contact:	26155/26168
Updated:	June 2020
Review:	June 2022
Version:	1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/2379/20