Bariatric Advantage

Why Are Specialty Supplements Important After Bariatric Surgery?

Supplements after surgery: they're vital to your health

It's common for weight-loss surgery patients to develop a nutrient deficiency after surgery. So it's important for you to feed your body with the vitamins and minerals it needs to prevent such a deficiency. Nutrient shortages frequently occur in four main areas that can affect your health, with potentially serious outcomes. Ready to learn more about these possible health concerns and how to avoid them?

Protect muscle

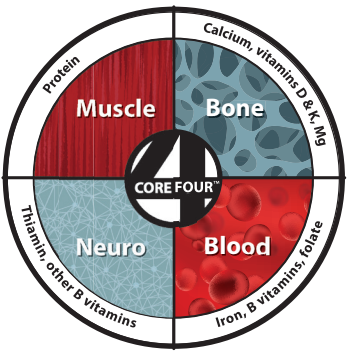
ASMBS guidelines recommend a high-protein diet lifelong after surgery with a high-quality protein supplement such as 100% whey isolate.[1]

Without proper protein intake, you may lose too much muscle instead of fat. Rapid weight loss after surgery can put you at further risk of losing too much muscle mass. If you don't reach your minimum daily protein goals, it could result in not having enough muscle to support your body.[2]

Protect neurological health

Vitamins B_1, B_{12}, E, and folate, along with copper, are important to neurological health, and with inadequate levels long-term symptoms like burning, weakness, and tingling of the hands and feet can occur.[3,4]

If vitamin deficiency symptoms are allowed to progress, brain, muscle, and nerve conditions among others can develop months after bariatric surgery.[3,4] Long-term vitamin B_1 deficiency can lead to permanent damage including paralysis and problems with mental function.[3]



Keep bones strong

90% of patients have low levels of vitamin D before bariatric surgery.[1] After surgery, your body may have challenges absorbing vitamin D, calcium, vitamin K, and other nutrients that help support bone health.[5]

Bariatric surgery may contribute to a decrease in total amount of bone mass in your body. Long-term support with calcium and vitamins D and K can help prevent bone loss.[6]

If you don't get enough of these nutrients, deficiencies can lead to bone loss.[7]

Iron out anemia

Due to bariatric surgery, you may have reduced absorption of iron, vitamin B_{12}, and folic acid.

Without supplementation, deficiencies can lead to or worsen existing anemias that affect production of healthy blood cells.

Deficiency symptoms can include tiredness, dizziness, and shortness of breath. If left untreated, it can lead to need of blood transfusions.

Talk to your doctor today to discover the right bariatric-specific supplement for you!

Why over-the-counter supplements aren't enough for bariatric patients

ASMBS Guidelines (Min) for Roux-En-Y Gastric Bypass (RYGB)[3]	# of OTC (retail) Chewable Multivitamins† Estimated to Meet Guidelines	# of Bariatric Specialty Chewable Multivitamins
Thiamin 12 mg	10	2
Vitamin A 5,000 IU	4	
Vitamin B_{12} 350	146	
Vitamin D 3,000‡ IU	3	
Iron 45	6	

†Centrum® adult chewable†
‡Until serum 25(OH)D levels > 30 ng/mL

Because your body can no longer take in nutrients like it did, it needs more than what an OTC chewable supplement can provide. You would need to take more of these supplements to get the same amount of nutrients found in a bariatric-specific supplement. And if you take too many OTC multivitamins, you risk a nutrient overdose! Bariatric-specific formulas are created to provide the concentrated nutrition you need to prevent nutrient deficiencies that affect the core four concerns.

Different body, different supplements

You've already taken the biggest step toward a healthier life. Stay on track by getting the nutrition you need to support the core four healthy components. Specialty supplements help make it easy for you. With bariatric supplements and regular, lifelong follow-up care with your healthcare practitioner, you can achieve optimal wellness for a lifetime of good health.

References:

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3. Becker D et al. The neurological complications of nutritional deficiency following bariatric surgery. *J Obes*. 2012;2012:608534
4. Sari S et al. Sarcopenic obesity - definition, etiology and consequences. *Curr Opin Clin Nutr Metab Care*. 2008;11(6):693–700.
5. Parrott J et al. ASMBS Integrated Health Nutritional Guidelines for the Surgical Weight Loss Patient—2016 Update: Micronutrients. *Surg Obes Relat Dis*. 2017;S1550-7289(16):30882-30886.
6. Kim J et al. Metabolic bone changes after bariatric surgery. *Surg Obes Relat Dis*. 2015;11(2):406-411.
7. Pizzorno L. Bariatric Surgery: Bad to the Bone, Part 1. *Integrative Medicine*. 2016;15 (1):48-54.