

Physical Activity for Bariatric Patients

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Physical activity is extremely important to the success of bariatric surgery. Surgeon Gus Huerta of the Solutions Surgical Weight Loss Center in Dickson Tennessee believes that “surgery is one small portion of the overall equation to successful weight control.” Establishing a physically active lifestyle prior to surgery will benefit the patient in the recovery phase. Implementing good nutrition habits and smoking cessation are also very important.

Following bariatric surgery at Horizon Medical Center, patients participate in a comprehensive aftercare program. The program includes nutrition, exercise, and psychological support services. According to Dr. Huerta, this program helps develop “the proper habits that allow a patient to utilize the tools that we have now given them to fight that battle of obesity and now win that battle.”

25 Reasons to Exercise

1. Achieve and maintain goal weight
2. Build muscle tissue
3. Increase strength and endurance
4. Increase metabolism, burn fat
5. Improve mobility
6. Improve skin elasticity
7. Enhance mood
8. Improve self-esteem
9. Lower blood pressure
10. Lower blood sugar
11. Reduce stiffness in joints
12. Improve heart and lung function
13. Promote healing
14. Help with smoking cessation
15. Strengthen bones and reduce bone loss
16. Increase energy level
17. Improve lipids (increase HDL/lower LDL)
18. Improve posture
19. Improve mental alertness and memory
20. Promote sleep
21. Decrease stress, depression, and anxiety
22. Improve flexibility
23. Increase capacity for physical work
24. Increase life expectancy
25. Doctor says so

4 Steps to a Lifestyle of Physical Activity

Step 1: Set Personal Goals

Set goals based on the “reason to exercise” listed above. Example: “My goal is to achieve and maintain my goal weight.”

Step 2: Determine How to achieve Goals

Choose activities that fit your lifestyle from each of the following categories:

- Cardiovascular – Examples: walking, biking, treadmill, water exercise
- Strength Training – Examples: weight machines, free weights, resistance bands
- Flexibility – Example: stretching before and after exercise
- Schedule timing of physical activity (The FIT Principle):

F – Frequency: number of exercise sessions per week

I – Intensity: calculate Target Heart Rate (THR)

$220 - \text{age} - \text{Resting Heart Rate (RHR)} \times .60 + \text{Resting Heart Rate} = \text{lower limit of THR}$

$220 - \text{age} - \text{Resting Heart Rate (RHR)} \times .60 + \text{Resting Heart Rate} = \text{upper limit of THR}$

Resting Heart Rate is the number of beats per minute at rest

(Medications that lower heart rate invalidate this formula.)

T – Time: duration of exercise

Choose location for exercise: Examples: home, mall, park, work, fitness center, church or school

Step 3: Implement Plan

- Make a commitment and start today
- Get started slowly and pace yourself
- Stay consistent
- Fit physical activity into your daily routine

Step 4: Regularly Evaluate Plan

- Discuss with exercise physiologist
- Monitor progress
- Recognize achievement

Exercise Expectations Before and After Bariatric Surgery

Pre-Op

Begin an exercise program prior to surgery. Meet with exercise physiologist to individualize plan.

Post-Op Day 1

Walk in room 2-3 times and sit in chair with nurse assistance.

Post-Op Day 2 – Day 7

Walk 3-5 minutes, 4-6 times a day.

Post-Op Week 1- Week 2

Continue walking, increasing the time of the walk to 5-15 minutes, 3 times a day.

Post-Op Week 2- Week 4

Continue walking 10-15 minutes, 3 times a day.

May begin weight training with doctor approval.

Post-Op Month 1- Month 3

Continue 30 minutes to 1 hour of cardiovascular activity at least 5 days per week. Begin or continue weight training.

All wounds must be healed before participating in water exercise.

Post-Op Month 3 and On

Stay committed to exercise and bariatric aftercare program.



Sample Work-out Routines

Routine 1

Monday – Cardiovascular activity for 30-40 minutes and upper body weights

Tuesday – Cardiovascular activity for 30-40 minutes and lower body weights

Wednesday – Cardiovascular activity for 30-40 minutes

Thursday – Cardiovascular activity for 30-40 minutes and upper body weights

Friday – Cardiovascular activity for 30-40 minutes and lower body weights

Routine 2

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – Cardiovascular activity 20-40 minutes and upper and lower body weights

Saturday and Sunday – Walk 15-30 minutes twice a day

Home Exercise Program

1. Begin by performing 1 set of 10-15 repetitions for each exercise. Gradually increase to 3-5 sets of 10-15 repetitions over a 4-7 week period.
2. The speed of each movement should be 2 seconds up and 4 seconds down.
3. Begin with dumbbell weight that you can easily lift 10-15 times.
4. Wear shoes to prevent falls.

Tricep Kickback



Sit in chair. Grasp a dumbbell in one hand. Begin with elbow bent and dumbbell at side. Extend dumbbell backwards, fully extending arm.

Squats



Stand in front of a chair with feet shoulder-width apart. Sit down slowly, then stand up. Keep arms outstretched.

Abdominal Crunch



Lie on bed or floor with arms across chest. Raise the upper back slightly, keeping the neck in neutral position and eyes focused on the ceiling.

Bicep Curl

Sitting or Standing



Grasp a dumbbell in each hand, palms facing forward. Curl the dumbbell up by flexing at the elbow.

One Arm Roll

Stand with left foot forward, right foot back. Place hand on sturdy surface approximately 25 inches tall. Grasp dumbbell with right hand.

Start with dumbbell aligned with left knee and pull up toward waistline. Reverse feet, and repeat with left hand.



Chest Press on Bed/Floor



Lie on bed or floor. Grasp a dumbbell in each hand. Begin with the dumbbells at chest level and press the dumbbells straight up until arms are fully extended.

Chest Press on Wall



Stand in front of a wall. Begin by leaning back into the wall and press back.

Chest Press on Counter



Stand in front of the kitchen counter with hands shoulder-width apart. Begin by leaning into the counter and press back.

Modified Push Up Chest Press



Lie on the floor with arms shoulder-width apart and knees on the floor. Begin by pressing the body up with arms fully extended.

Shoulder Press

Sitting or Standing



Grasp a dumbbell in each hand, palms facing forward. Begin with the dumbbells slightly above shoulder level and press them up overhead.

Shoulder Shrugs



Grasp a dumbbell in each hand with arms at your side. Keep your elbows straight and shrug your shoulders up toward your ears.