

Whey Protein and Weight Loss Surgery Fact Sheet

Before and after weight loss surgery, patients are advised to eat primarily protein. Protein helps prepare the body before surgery and reduce the amount of fat in the liver.¹ Post-surgery, protein is necessary to repair body cells (help with wound healing), to build and repair muscles and bones, to provide a source of energy, and to control many of the important processes in the body related to metabolism. Protein also helps to maintain muscle mass during weight loss.

Protein Requirements

Post-surgery protein recommendations are 60-80g of high quality protein per day.² A high quality protein contains all of the essential amino acids required by the body. Due to the reduced stomach capacity after surgery, it may be difficult to consume this much protein from food alone. High quality protein supplements can help patients meet their daily protein requirements.

Whey Proteins

- Whey proteins are high quality proteins derived from milk, with protein quality scores similar to those of egg protein.
- Whey proteins are complete proteins, containing all of the essential amino acids required by the human body.
- Whey proteins are easily digested and absorbed.
- Whey proteins are rich in leucine, an amino acid proven to preserve lean muscle tissue while promoting fat loss.³
- Whey protein contributes the amino acids required by the body to synthesize glutathione, an important antioxidant required to support a healthy immune system.

¹"Weight Loss Surgery Pre-Op Diet." <http://www.wlshelp.com/pre-weight-loss-surgery-diet.html> (accessed 3/12/09).

²Aills, L., J. Blankenship, C. Buffington, M. Furtado, and J. Parrott. 2008. ASMB's Allied Health Nutritional Guidelines for the Surgical Weight Loss Patient. *Surgery for Obesity and Related Diseases* 4: S73-S108.

³Layman, D. K. 2002. Role of Leucine in Protein Metabolism during Exercise and Recovery. *Canadian Journal of Applied Physiology* 27(6): 646-62.