

Nutrition is important for preparing your body for surgery and for healing after surgery. Choose nutritious foods, reduce sugar and processed food intake, and eliminate alcohol consumption.

Most people can meet their nutrient needs through food alone. However, a nutritional supplement could be considered if you are at nutritional risk.

Risk factors include:

- Recent unintentional weight loss
- Recent poor appetite/intake
- Underweight (BMI less than 18.5 or BMI less than 23 if over age 65)
- Receiving chemo/radiation therapy
- Non-healing wounds.

BEFORE SURGERY ONLY:

Seven days before surgery: **Carbohydrate** intake helps to decrease metabolic stress, prevent low blood sugar and improve insulin resistance after surgery.

Good sources include: • Fruit • Starchy vegetables (potatoes, corn, green peas) • Whole grains • Beans/legumes.

The morning of surgery: Consume 50 grams of carbohydrates from clear liquids up to two hours before scheduled arrival time. Examples include apple juice or sports drinks (avoid red).

BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER SURGERY, FOCUS ON:

Protein helps to heal wounds, build energy, repair damaged muscle and keep your immune system strong.

Good sources include:

- Beans/legumes
- Meat
- Fish
- Eggs
- Dairy, such as Greek yogurt
- Nuts/seeds.

Vitamins A and C assist with healing.

- Vitamin A is found in sweet potatoes, butternut squash and cantaloupe.
- Vitamin C is found in citrus fruits, strawberries, dark leafy greens and broccoli.

Fiber minimizes constipation, which is common when taking prescription pain medication.

Good sources include:

- Fresh/frozen fruits and vegetables
- Beans/legumes
- Whole grains.

Healthy fats like Omega-3 help to heal wounds and decrease inflammation.

Good sources include:

- Salmon and sardines
- Avocado
- Walnuts and almonds.

Iron assists with creating blood cells.

Good sources include:

- Meat
- Beans/legumes.

Be sure to hydrate.

Water is the best!

FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES:

Glucose management is especially important surrounding surgery. High blood glucose (sugar) can prevent your body from healing properly.

Speak with your physician or a registered dietitian if there is a concern about your nutritional status before or after surgery.

For more information, you can access the "Eating Healthy After Surgery" video at www.northoaks.org/surgicalresources, located toward the bottom of the page.



You can also access the video by using your smartphone camera to scan the QR code.