



Mashhad University of
Medical Sciences



Surgery



Dr. Majid Ghayour Mobarhan

Nutritionist from the UK

Sometimes it is difficult to eat after surgery due to a lack of appetite. This usually happens a few days after surgery, but it is important to continue eating nutritious foods during this period of recovery. Constipation can cause a lack of appetite. In this case, talk to your surgeon about ways to relieve constipation before using over-the-counter medications. If you are unable to consume enough calories after your surgery, try to eat calorie-dense foods whenever possible. That means eating foods that contain more calories per bite than others. For example, a cup of green salad would be a food low in calories per cup, while avocado would be very high in calories per cup.


► **The amino acids** in protein help heal wounds and repair tissue. Protein can also help with strength and energy following surgery. Lean meats such as chicken, turkey, pork, and seafood are excellent sources of protein. You can also get protein from eggs, nuts, beans, and tofu. Dairy products also contain protein, but if you are struggling with constipation, look for other sources of protein instead of dairy options. If you have difficulty getting enough protein in your diet after surgery, try adding protein powder to drinks or smoothies.

► **Carbohydrates** Fatigue follows any common surgical procedure, but eating the right types of carbohydrates can help you regain your energy levels. Get carbohydrates from high-fiber foods such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, beans, and legumes. These foods increase energy levels without causing constipation



► **Vitamins and Minerals:** Perhaps the most important nutrients in your post-surgery diet are vitamins and minerals. Vitamin A (found in orange and dark green veggies like carrots, sweet potatoes, kale, and spinach) and vitamin C (found in citrus fruits, berries, potatoes, tomatoes, melons, and sweet bell peppers) help with wound healing. Vitamin D (found in milk, fish, eggs, and fortified cereals) promotes bone health. Vitamin E (found in vegetable oils, nuts, beef liver, milk, and eggs) protects the body from free radicals. Vitamin K (found in green leafy veggies, fish, liver, and vegetable oils) is necessary for blood clotting.

► **In addition** to eating foods rich in fiber, protein, healthy fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals, you need to stay hydrated after surgery. Proper hydration is not only essential for recovery but may also be needed to help the body absorb medications after surgery. To keep your body hydrated, be sure to drink at least eight glasses of water every day. The foods you should and should not eat vary depending on the type of surgery and each medication you take.



Surgery

► Surgery ◀

If you have undergone surgery, the food you eat can greatly affect the healing speed of your wound. Eating the right foods can prevent complications such as constipation and high

blood glucose, and provide the skin's protein-building elements needed for rapid healing. One of the best things you can do when you have surgery to improve your nutrition is to focus on whole foods. This means choosing foods that are "whole" or unprocessed.

For example, an orange is a complete meal. Orange juice is the processed version of that food. Baked potatoes are a complete meal, while French fries are processed and are less healthy because it is fried. The list goes on and on - chicken breast is better than chicken nuggets, onions are better than onion rings. Processed foods are high in fat, sugar, salt, and chemical additives, but have far fewer fiber and vitamins than other foods.



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It is important to include fiber in your diet as you are recovering from surgery.

Not only are high-fiber foods healthier than their low-fiber counterparts, but fiber also plays a major role in preventing constipation, a common complication after surgery.



Constipation is more than just annoying after surgery, it can increase pain and the chances of returning to the hospital during the recovery period.



► High-Fiber Foods ◀

- Whole grain bread
- Whole grains
- Fruits
- Vegetables

► Foods Likely to Cause Constipation ◀

Dried or dehydrated foods, Processed foods,
Cheese, Milk, and dairy products,
Red meat