

# THE BARIX™ SUPPORT GROUP GUIDE

For Education and Support of all Barix Clinics Patients

## BACK ON TRACK

*How to jump-start healthful habits!*

**B**ariatric surgery is an effective tool that will help you achieve long-term weight loss. Those that fully embrace the lifestyle habits that support a healthful weight will be most successful at reaching and maintaining their weight loss goals. Hectic schedules, stress, emotions, a toxic environment (that is—one filled with poor food choices) or just plain old complacency can get in the way of the best intentions for a healthful lifestyle. If you need a jump-start to get back on track with healthful lifestyle habits, this Support Group Guide is for you.

Although some factors that impact weight loss are out of your control—you cannot change your DNA, gender, height, or physical limitations. The remaining factors of food and beverage choices, portion sizes, protein intake (especially during the rapid weight loss phase), and activity habits are within your ability to control. Let's take a look at each of these to get you back on track.

### ACTIVITY HABITS

Including exercise in your daily activities is essential to weight loss and maintenance. It is almost impossible to maintain a healthy weight with a sedentary lifestyle. Study after study shows that those that successfully maintain a healthy

weight make exercise a regular part of their day. The benefits to regular exercise are tremendous. Included in the benefits are:

- **Improved** weight loss and maintenance, psychological well-being, mental abilities, restful sleep, and cardiovascular fitness
- **Increased** muscle tissue, metabolism, and energy
- **Decreased** food cravings, stress, and risk for diabetes, stroke and colon cancer
- **Development** of stronger bones

**With all of those benefits, why do people find it so difficult to maintain a regular exercise program?**

- A time crunch is one of the barriers people report. Just trying to keep your head above water, exercise may seem to be adding another commitment. Exercise is really an investment of your time with payoffs of increased efficiency and improved sleep; you will actually be more productive throughout your entire day. If your health is important to you, there really is no choice but to find the time for regular exercise.
- Just can't get motivated? Put your work out clothes next to your bed, so when you wake up you are ready to go. Keep workout clothes in your car so you can stop by the gym on the way home. Find something that you enjoy doing,



that fits your schedule, that is challenging, but doable. You may not like any type of exercise. If that is the case, you need to just get out and do it. After a few weeks, even the hard-core couch potatoes admit that they have an improved sense of well-being.

- Can't afford to join a health club? All you really need is a good pair of walking shoes to get started. You can add some inexpensive dumbbells and have a well-rounded program.

*It doesn't matter who you are or where you've been...you have the power to change...to thrive rather than survive...to break free from the habits that hold you back from all that you can be.*

*You deserve a great life, happiness, health, and satisfaction; choose today to make it that way.*

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## FOOD CHOICES

Plan meals and snacks in advance to assure that there will be easy access to healthful foods and beverages throughout the day. Instead of keeping your mind focused on what you will be eating all day, planning frees you to have healthful foods available when you need them. You don't need to worry about running out to a fast food restaurant on your lunch hour, stopping by the grocery store nightly on your way home, or wandering to the vending machines in hopes of finding a healthful snack there. Your meals and snacks are planned out, you have purchased the foods, and you have those foods when you need them.

Another advantage of meal planning is that it limits your choices at the times that you are most vulnerable to making poor food choices—when you are hungry, rushed or stressed. You are assured of a healthful lunch if you packed it the night before and brought it with you to work. If you forgot your lunch or didn't plan ahead, you have to make the choice of where you are going to eat and what you are going to eat, usually from an extensive menu of not so healthful food choices. Your chances of having a healthful, low-fat, no-added-sugar meal are much greater if you plan ahead.

Use the *Barix Clinics' Nutrition Guide* to plan your meals and snacks. Then make a grocery-shopping list before you go to the store to help you make good choices. Focus your thoughts on healthful foods that will nourish your body and improve your health. You will find an abundance of delicious, healthful foods that will satisfy you. Before long, you will notice that some of the unhealthy foods that you ate before are not appealing. You have developed new habits and new tastes.

## PORTION SIZES

Estimate portion sizes. Take the time to measure out single serving sizes onto your plates and bowls for one day, then remember what a serving looks like and “eyeball” it the next time. Estimate three ounces of meat as the size of a deck of playing cards, the palm of a woman's hand or a computer mouse. A half-cup serving of fruit, rice, pasta, or vegetables is the size of a half of a baseball or a small fist. Your thumb is about the size of an ounce of cheese. A small hand in the position to hold a tennis ball is a one-cup serving of milk, yogurt, or fresh greens. Most people are driven to eat by what they see rather than how they feel. By putting too much food in front of you, you will perceive this oversized portion as normal. If you begin to serve smaller portions, you will soon perceive this amount of food to be normal. You will be satisfied with smaller amounts of food.

## BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

There can be many emotional and social beliefs that undermine weight loss and maintenance success. These may be very subtle or very apparent. Understanding that there may be stumbling blocks in your path allows you to approach and challenge the belief and move ahead to make the lifestyle changes that will lead to success.

*Believe in your vision of where you want to be.*



*Believe in your ability to make the positive changes needed to achieve the health and weight goals that you have set for yourself.*

Our internal messages, thoughts, beliefs emotions, and expectations, can boost us up to achieve our goals or hold us back to a life of stagnation. Learning to recognize these internal messages, asking yourself questions about their accuracy, and then replacing inaccurate messages with powerful, positive statements can have a huge impact on boosting your ability to make healthful lifestyle changes.

- *This too will fail* is a belief that the bariatric surgery will be just one more weight loss attempt that will fail. Bariatric surgery is different. It is much more effective than anything you have ever done before. Yet it is only a tool—a tool that must be used in conjunction with healthful lifestyle habits for long-term success.
- *Exercise really isn't necessary.* You may have some success without exercise. You may feel that exercise really isn't necessary for success. You may think that regular exercise is too demanding for the supposed benefits. Study after study supports the fact that regular exercise is an essential component for long-term maintenance of weight loss. Don't fool yourself, regular exercise isn't an option—it's a necessity. Find something that works into your schedule and interest level and engage in it regularly. The benefits are worth the effort.
- *It's not fair.* Others seem to lose weight effortlessly. They can eat what they want. They actually enjoy exercise. They lost all of their excess weight fast and they look great. You feel that you struggle to lose each pound and you still have a ways to go. It just isn't fair, why bother? This negative, defeatist attitude will get you nowhere. Change these negative thoughts into powerful positive thoughts that have the ability to transform your lifestyle and health.

- **There is something wrong with me.** This is the inability to escape self-defeating negative thoughts, a distorted body image and a feeling that no matter what changes you've made, you are still the fat kid that everyone used to tease in gym class. Your thoughts, positive or negative, will direct your behavior. Listen to your thoughts. Become aware of what your thoughts are telling you. If the thought is not true, doesn't serve your best interest, and doesn't help you to achieve your weight loss goals, then you need to replace the thought with a powerful positive thought.

**Emotional benefits to remaining overweight may be more powerful than the desire to change.** Perhaps the excess weight is a protective shield. You may have experienced a trauma earlier in life that makes you feel vulnerable as you get close to your goal weight and others begin to treat you differently. Working through these issues with a qualified therapist may improve your success.

**A feeling of deprivation and loss** over giving up food to nurture your emotions can occur after the surgery. We learn from a very young age to use food as a way to get over hurts.

Recognizing that you are nurturing your emotions with food is the first step. When you reach for that carbohydrate treat, ask yourself what you are feeling at that moment. Are you really hungry? Are you sad? Do you feel hurt? Then ask yourself what it is that you need. If you are hungry, eat a healthy meal or snack. If you are sad, call a friend or go for a walk. If you are hurt ask a family member for a hug.

**Perfectionism** is an all or nothing thought process. Once you have made a poor food choice or skipped a week's worth of exercise, you feel like giving up. Perfection is just an illusion. Place your focus instead on progress. One great way to stay on track is to measure your progress with your daily food and exercise log. This will boost your confidence by documenting the progress that you are making. You will succeed by perseverance, not perfectionism.

**Coasting through life to the point where very little is demanded of one can become an attractive goal.** We are all capable of so much more than we believe we are, but that potential may be smothered by the societal message that pressure is bad. It is through that pressure or stress that we grow. The push to achieve a health goal is the type of positive pressure that allows change and success.

**Illusions of Thinness** can be disappointing if after reaching your weight loss goal, life was not as different as you had expected. Yes, movement was easier and you saw improvements in your health, but you were still stuck in the same boring job and the dream love of your life didn't show up. Unfortunately, losing weight isn't the solution to all of life's problems. Realizing that you had the illusion of thinness opens the door to constructively begin to deal with the other issues in your life.

**Emotional eating is simply, eating in response to emotions rather than hunger.** The emotions may be negative such as, anger, frustration, feeling overwhelmed, stress, fatigue, boredom, sadness or depression. Emotional eating may also come from the emotions of joy, happiness, celebration, comfort or excitement. It can be conscious or unconscious. We all need strategies to solve problems or soothe emotions with-out the use of food.

**High stress levels** for prolonged periods of time can lead to an increase in appetite and stress-induced weight gain. This excess weight is often found around the midsection. People under stressful conditions often experience cravings for carbohydrate foods and eating in

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## NUTRITION NUTRITION NIBBLER

**L**aurel Mellin explains how difficult it is to make changes in our behaviors without emotional learning in her book, *The Pathway*. Knowing what to do is important, and understanding why we should do something can be motivating although when emotions are aroused, knowledge isn't enough. Two simple skills, self-nurturing and effective limit setting, can be practiced and mastered so that emotional learning takes place and comfort comes from within rather than

from external solutions. The most common external solutions are overeating, chemical pleasures (drinking, smoking, drugs), spending, over-working, rescuing others, putting up walls, too much thinking and people pleasing. The rewards to mastery of the skills of self-nurturing and effective limit setting are:

- **Integration**—self-acceptance and inner peace
- **Balance**—extreme emotional highs and lows and emotional numbness is replaced with a balanced emotional life
- **Sanctuary**—a warm, secure place within

- **Intimacy**—more intimate and healthy relationships
- **Vibrancy**—you look and feel your best
- **Spirituality**—a new appreciation for the mystery and grace of life

*The Pathway* offers many options for developing the skills of self-nurturing and effective limit setting. Visit their web site at [www.thepathway.org](http://www.thepathway.org) for information about their small groups, telephone groups, Internet support, individual counseling, Solution Kits and more.

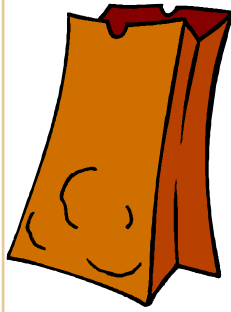


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response to these cravings can quickly become a habit. Learn to manage chronic high stress through exercise and stress reduction methods.

Take an honest look at the stumbling blocks that may be getting in your way to success. You may need to seek out professional help to deal with unresolved issues or events that have happened in your life that are preventing you from reaching or maintaining long-term weight loss. Make the effort to address those issues and get moving to a more healthful and rewarding life.

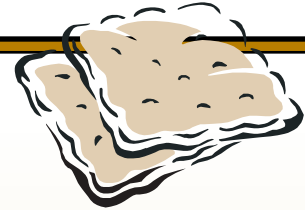
Get back on track with regular exercise, healthful food choices, portion control, and managing the stumbling blocks that may get in the way to the success that you deserve.



## IT WORKED FOR ME

When I eat out, I ask for a “to go” container as soon as my meal arrives at the table. I pack 1/2–3/4 of the food away before I start eating so that I am not even tempted to stuff myself. The leftovers make a great lunch for the next day.

### Cheesecake Snack



- 8 oz. cream cheese, fat free
- 3 Tbsp Splenda®
- 4 Graham Crackers
- 2 cups sliced fresh strawberries

Mix cream cheese and Splenda together in bowl. Break graham crackers in half. Spread cream cheese mixture on graham crackers. Top with sliced strawberries. Makes 8 servings.

**NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING:** 111 calories; 6 grams protein; 3 grams fat; 14 grams carbohydrate; 230 mg sodium.

### Creamy Chicken & Rice Bake

Submitted by Lori C.

- 1 (12 fl oz.) can evaporated skim milk
- 1 (3 oz.) pkg. fat-free cream cheese
- 1 (10 3/4 oz.) can Healthy Request® Cream of Chicken Soup (Campbell's)
- 1/2 c. water
- 1/2 tsp. Garlic powder or 1 Tbsp minced garlic
- 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1 (16 oz.) bag of frozen mixed veggies of your choice (thawed)
- 2 c. cut up cooked chicken breasts (about two good size breasts)
- 1 1/2 c. instant rice uncooked
- 1/2 c. 2% Cheddar cheese, shredded

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 9x13 pan with cooking spray. Combine evaporated milk and cream cheese in baking dish and whip with whisk until smooth. Add soup, water, garlic, and pepper; mix well. Add veggies, chicken and rice. Cover tightly with foil. Bake 35 minutes. Remove foil and top with cheese. Continue baking uncovered for 10 to 15 minutes until cheese is melted and mixture is bubbly. Let stand 15 minutes before serving. Makes 8 servings.

**NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING:** 235 calories; 14 grams protein; 4 grams fat; 38 grams carbohydrate; 362 mg sodium.



To receive a free **RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY GUIDE**, **CALL 800-282-0066** or send us an email at [rc@barixclinics.com](mailto:rc@barixclinics.com) with your name and contact information.

Our reconstructive surgery program is currently performed at our centers in Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois—and we are planning to expand our program at Scottsdale, AZ, Langhorne, PA, and Wylie, TX facilities in the next few months.

Special thanks to Lori C. for the recipe. Please send comments, ideas, recipes, and "It Worked For Me" tips to Deb Hart, RD, LD at [dhart@foresthealth.com](mailto:dhart@foresthealth.com).

## OTHERS CARE. PLEASE SHARE.

Please tell us about the lives that have changed because you shared your weight-loss story. Submit your story on the “Share Your Success” section of the Patient website. What you have to say may be printed in this publication or on our website and can serve as inspiration to all.

**REFER a Friend: Call 800-282-0066 or REQUEST a FREE INFORMATION GUIDE for a FRIEND: [www.barixinfo.com/sgg](http://www.barixinfo.com/sgg)**



**BARIX CLINICS™**  
America's Leader in Bariatric Surgery