



TIP: Identify situations that you get foods 'stuck'

- It is not unusual to get food stuck sometimes, and is a good way to learn what foods you can manage and help you to re-learn your new eating patterns!
- However, you should not have problems with food getting stuck on a regular basis.
- There are some times and situations when you may be having difficulties managing foods, even foods you normally manage well.
- We have detailed some of the most common reasons that we find people have difficulties managing foods.

Eating too fast

- As the weeks and months move on it can be easy to forget the 3 basic steps of Lapband eating
 - ✓ **Take your time over your meal**
 - ✓ **Take small mouthfuls**
 - ✓ **Chew thoroughly**



Distraction

- The most common times you may be likely to eat too fast are when you are
 - ✗ Distracted
 - ✗ Eating on the run
 - ✗ Talking, driving, working, watching TV whilst eating.
- Particularly to begin with, it is important to concentrate on your new eating habits, as they are not yet a habit. Even months down the track it is easy to slip back into old habits of taking a big mouthful if your brain is busy focusing on something else.

If things don't go to plan...

- **If something gets stuck:**
 - ✓ **Don't panic**
 - ✓ **Sit for a few minutes, and try to relax**
 - ✓ **Standup and stretch**
 - ✓ **See if the food goes down, or 'reflexes' back up**
 - ➔ **Think about what went wrong**
 - ➔ **Identify the problem to avoid repeating it**

Tips to avoid discomfort

- **Remember the basic steps of Lapband eating:**
 - ✓ **Take your time over your meal**
 - ✓ **Take small mouthfuls**
 - ✓ **Chew thoroughly**
- **Try eating a smaller portion**
- **Try sipping water before your meal**
- **Avoid skipping meals and getting 'over-hungry'**
- **Avoid problem foods**
- **Relax at meals times – don't rush your meals!**
- **Focus on eating**
- **Experiment with different foods and cooking techniques**

Eating too much

- Are you trying to eat more food that your small stomach pouch can hold?



Over hungry

- If you have skipped a meals or snack you may find that you get very hungry by your next meal.
- When you get to this 'over-hungry' stage you may find it is very difficult to eat slowly and take small mouthfuls.
- We find this is the most common time to have difficulty managing foods!

Morning

- Some people find that they have difficulty managing foods at certain times of the day, particularly first thing in the morning.
- For some people, the stomach seems to 'tighten' overnight, and it takes a while for their stomach to 'wake up' in the morning, to relax and be comfortable with food.
- You may find it easier to manage a liquid breakfast (eg Up&Go or Optifast), or delay your breakfast until late morning.



Problem times & situations



Stress

- We've all experienced 'butterflies' in the stomach at some point, so we know that the stomach can respond to stress!
- With a Lapband you may find that your stomach 'tightens' when you are stressed, so you may find you have difficulty managing foods. This is why it is important to relax at meal times.
- If you are going through a stressful time, you may find it is easier to return to soft foods whilst you resolve the stress.
- You may have similar difficulties if your body is under other types of 'stress', for example if you are sick.

First mouthful

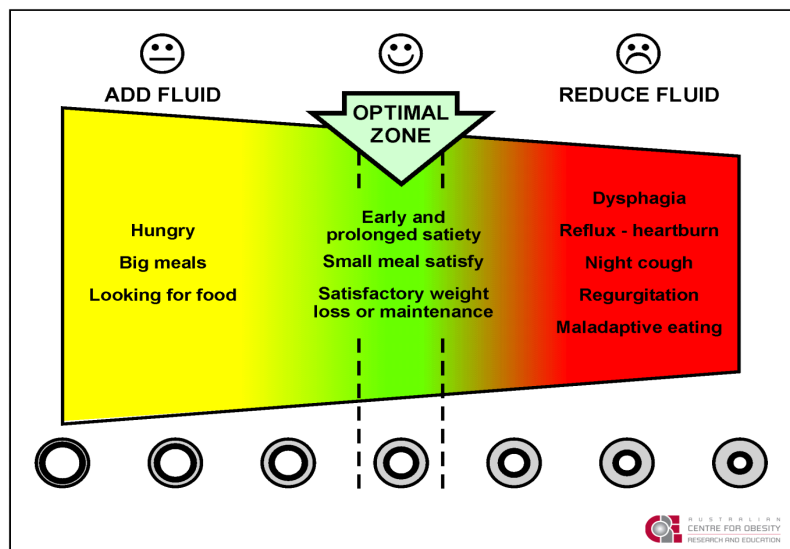
- Some people find that the first mouthful always seems to get stuck. This may be caused by a number of different factors (including being over-hungry, eating too fast or stress!)
- You may find that having a few sips of water a few minutes before you eat can help to 'relax' your stomach.

Still having problems?

- If you still do not tolerate foods despite chewing very well, and are managing only fluids and purees, your band may be too tight.
- Ideally you should be in the 'green zone' (see graph); if you are in the 'red zone' your band is too tight
- Please call SIOS for an appointment to take a small amount of fluid out from your band.

Problem foods

- Everyone is different and will be able to manage different foods.
- Which foods you can manage can vary from day to day and depends on a number of factors, such as how tight your band is, other foods you have eaten and your mood.
- Try foods more than once. If you have trouble with something once, try it again another time. You may find that foods you had trouble with one day are easier to manage on another day.
- Remember: everyone is different and will be able to manage different foods. Don't be put off by what others have said they can't eat; try foods for yourself.
- There may be some foods with which you may consistently have some difficulty.
- Common foods which cause problems include
 - ✗ Soft white bread (forms a doughy lump which gets stuck)
 - ✗ Foods which are difficult to chew into small pieces eg red meat
 - ✗ Skins of some fruits and vegetables



Problem times & situations

Pasta	Cook pasta until soft
	Try small pasta shapes (eg shells)
	Try pastas of a different texture eg Gluten-free pasta
	Cut soft vegetables (eg zucchini) into thin strips (julienne). Cook lightly and serve with your favourite pasta sauce
Rice	Try different types of rice to see which suits you best eg long-grain, short grain
	Try different cooking methods: boil or absorption method or risotto
Fruit	Peel fruit
	Stew fruit in the microwave or on the stove until soft
	Try canned fruit or snack pack - a perfect snack size
Chicken Or meat	Casserole or stew—cook for 1 hour or more until meat is tender and falling apart. Throw in plenty of vegetables to cook until soft
	Try a crock pot, slow cooker or pressure cooker for softer meat and vegetables
	Poach chicken breast or thigh: lightly simmer in a little water or stock. Add some apple cider vinegar or lemon juice to make it even more tender. Add some vegetables to the liquid for extra flavour (and soft veges!)
	Lamb or pork may be more tender than beef
	Try other protein foods like fish, legumes (baked beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, etc), tofu and eggs, that are softer in texture and easier to manage.
	Try marinating meat to help soften and add moisture Mediterranean: Fresh parsley/basil, crushed garlic, balsamic vinegar, olive oil Asian: Lime juice, honey, soy sauce, sesame oil Thai: Fresh coriander, grated ginger, chopped chilli, fish sauce, brown sugar Indian: Low-fat natural yogurt, mango chutney, curry powder Traditional: Worcestershire sauce, mustard, lemon juice, vinegar
Vegetables	Try soft vegetables, eg Zucchini, squash
	Cook vegetables well, until soft. Simmer in a little water or stock, or cook in microwave

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