



**TIP: Help to make your surgery easier**

#### Why Optifast?

To make the surgery easier and to reduce surgical risks, it is important to lose some weight prior to surgery. This weight loss can also help improve a fatty liver. To facilitate this weight loss, we recommend that you follow the Optifast Meal Plan for **2 weeks** before surgery.

The meal plan is a very-low-calorie-diet designed to produce rapid weight loss of around 1.5-2.5kg per week.

#### What is Optifast?

Optifast is a medically formulated meal replacement product. The Optifast Meal Plan consists of having 3 serves of Optifast each day in place of your normal meals. It provides you with the minimum amount of energy (carbohydrate, protein and essential fats) that your body needs to get through the day, as well as the Recommended Daily Intakes (RDIs) of all vitamins and minerals. Hence there is no need to have extra foods or vitamin supplements.

#### How does Optifast work?

Optifast is a very smart product. Its unique formula makes your body lose weight very quickly by utilising a "back-up" energy burning system, forcing your body to burn your own body fat.

**When used correctly, Optifast forces your body to burn your body fat**

When your body has minimal energy from foods, particularly from carbohydrate foods, it will start breaking down stored body fats as the main source of energy. This process is called "ketosis". Ketone chemicals produced as a result of body fats breakdown, act as a natural appetite suppressant for your body.

Consequently if you have additional foods, particularly carbohydrate

#### What do I do?

Optifast is a meal replacement product (i.e. 1 sachet Optifast replaces each of your 3 main meals per day).

Optifast is available from most chemists. They are available in individual serves/sachets of milkshakes, bars, mousse or soup.



**Have 3 serves of Optifast each day**

Preparation is simple! Just mix the Optifast sachet with water (follow directions provided in packet), and you have this as your meal. Optifast bars require no preparation.

foods, whilst on the Optifast Meal Plan, the "ketosis" process will not be turned on and your body will be much less effective in burning the body fat stores. In fact, your cravings for foods will increase as there are no ketone chemicals, or appetite suppressant effect, in your body. This will make it harder for you to follow the diet. For rapid weight loss, it is very important to stick strictly to the recommended diet, unless you have severe side effects (see page 2).



## Optifast Meal Plan

### What if I'm hungry?

When you are on the Optifast Meal Plan, it is normal to feel hungrier than usual for the first few days. However in time, your body will adjust to the new energy burning system. Your body will be satisfied with minimal amounts of foods as the ketone chemicals settle in your body.

If you are hungry, you can eat some foods which do not contain much energy, particularly those which are low in carbohydrates. In this meal plan, you may have up to 2 cups of low-starch / low-carbohydrate vegetables per day.

#### Suitable Vegetables

Asparagus  
Broccoli  
Brussel Sprouts  
Cabbage  
Capsicum  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Celery  
Chinese Green Vegies  
Cucumber  
Fresh Mushrooms  
Green Beans  
Lettuce  
Onion  
Spinach  
Squash  
Tomato  
Watercress  
Zucchini  
Herbs & spices



You will notice that what you eat on the Optifast Meal Plan is very different to what we normally recommend. Even foods which are normally part of a healthy diet are not allowed on the Optifast Meal Plan. These include starchy vegetables (i.e. potato, sweet potato & pumpkin), legumes (i.e. baked beans & lentils); and bread, fruit and yoghurt.

The only foods you can include are *suitable vegetables* (see list), and these include green vegetables and salad vegetables. These vegetables can be eaten fresh or frozen. Canned vegetables are not suitable choices as they often contain added sugar.

You can either have the vegetables raw or steamed; but no oil, margarine or dressings should be added. You may add some vinegar, lemon juice, fresh or dried herbs, pepper and other spices as flavourings.

### Diet Jelly & Strained Broth Allowed

If you are hungry, you may have some low-carbohydrate foods like diet jelly and strained broth.

### How much fluid?

Rapid fat loss with Optifast places a load on your kidneys. It is important to have plenty of water to flush out your kidneys. You must drink at least 2 litres (or 10 large cups) fluid every day. This does not include your Optifast drinks. Don't guess the amount. Measure the quantity to make sure you are having enough.

### Drink at least 2 litres of water each day

Most of the 2 litres should be of *water*, but you can also include:-

- ✦ Tea or Coffee (no milk or sugar; but artificial sweetener is OK)
- ✦ Sugar-free Soft Drink
- ✦ Sugar-free Cordial
- ✦ Unflavoured Mineral Water

### Side effects

When you first go on Optifast, you may feel tired, dizzy or irritable. This should quickly pass as your body gets used to Optifast. Some people may also notice bad breath. This is due to the ketone chemicals in your body. If this makes you feel uncomfortable, chew a sugar-free mint. Contact your doctor if any of these side effects persist.

### Constipation

#### Use Benefiber

Optifast is almost completely absorbed by your body and leaves very little 'residue' or fibre in your gut, so you may not have regular bowel motions. Make sure you have some vegetables (see list) and enough fluids for regular bowel motions. A fibre supplement, such as Benefiber may also help.

# Optifast Meal Plan

## Sample Meal Plan

The Optifast Meal Plan is designed to replace your usual daily food intake.

The meal plan consist of:-

**3 serves of Optifast each day**

(1 **serve** = 1 sachet of Optifast milkshake, soup, dessert or 1bar )

### **Breakfast**

#### **1 serve Optifast**

Tea/coffee (no milk & sugar)



### **Lunch**

Clear broth (if desired)

#### **1 serve Optifast**

1 cup salad/low-starch vegetables (from list)

Diet jelly (if desired)

Water/coffee/tea/diet cordial/diet soft drinks



### **Dinner**

Clear broth (if desired)

#### **1 serve Optifast**

1 cup salad/low-starch vegetables (from list)

Diet jelly (if desired)

Water/coffee /diet cordial/diet soft drinks



Make sure you include  
at least  
**10 glasses of water**  
each day

In between meals, you can  
also include:  
Tea or Coffee  
Sugar-free Soft Drink  
Diet Cordial  
Unflavoured Mineral  
Water



**Drink, Drink, Drink**

**Michelle Singer**  
Accredited Practising Dietitian

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