

# ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle

# 2014

## A Healthy New Year

Your Month-by-Month Guide to Making this the Healthiest Year yet.

**M**onth by month, vow to make this your healthiest year yet. Good health doesn't just happen; it is built by daily habits over time. This year, focus on one new habit each month and at the end of the year you'll look back and see how far you have come.

### JANUARY Exercise

There are so many reasons for us to make the effort to move more each day. Feeling better, having more energy, managing or preventing disease, and living longer are just a few. This is a great time of year to focus on increasing your activity level — the holiday frenzy is over and nothing beats the winter blahs like a good workout. It is hard to think of any other activity that pays off in so many ways for a 30–45 minute daily effort.

Find a consistent time of day and a routine that works for you and get started. Then track your progress so you can see the changes in your abilities over time.

### FEBRUARY Planning

Now that you are beginning to feel the positive effects of the exercise you started in January, it's time to do a little planning. Most people have a good understanding of what they need to do to be as healthy as possible, but how do you get to the point of doing those things consistently? With a plan and a little prep work, you can simplify



your life, reach your health goals, and even save time and money — well worth your efforts.

Meal planning has a great payoff. Not only is the sharing of meals at home an important part of family health, cohesiveness and child development, homemade meals have an average of 250 fewer calories than restaurant meals.

Start with a list of family-favorite meals. Next, grab a calendar and jot down scheduled activities first so you can work your meals around them. Add in meals for a month — keep it simple and don't be afraid to repeat family favorites. Once you know what the plan is, you need to shop for it. Make a grocery list, referring to your calendar and recipes. Buy healthy staples to have on hand as well.

### MARCH Supplement Properly

Do a quick comparison of the supplements you are taking and those generally recommended. Consider supplements in chewable, powder or liquid form — they may be better absorbed after surgery. Work with your Barix nutritionist and your surgeon to

determine the supplement levels that are right for your individual needs. In general recommendations are:

- Start with 1–2 complete multi-vitamin/mineral supplements.
- Keep your vitamin B-12 level above 400 pg/ml with sublingual (under the tongue) supplements.
- Keep your bones strong. Take a daily calcium citrate supplement (1500–2000 mg for gastric bypass, 1500 mg for lap band or gastric sleeve) with vitamin D (1000–2000 IU) daily. These come in chews, lozenges, powder, liquid and pill form. Most calcium citrate pills are too big and will need to be broken.
- If your surgeon or nutritionist recommends an iron supplement, consider one of the chewable forms for better absorption and less digestive discomfort. Do not take iron supplements unless your labs indicate a need.

### APRIL Six Small Meals

Have you fully incorporated six small meals into your daily routine? If not, this is the month to focus on this important habit. Six small meals help to keep blood sugar levels on an even keel. This keeps energy high and food cravings low. Keep these things in mind when planning your meals:

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- Choose to fuel your body with healthful foods.
- Keep portions small.
- Build your diet around lean meats/fish/poultry/low-fat dairy products – add fresh fruits and vegetables and round out your diet with whole grains.
- Choose six small high-protein meals.
- Eat fewer processed foods.
- Choose foods based upon their nutrient value and their enjoyment factor.
- Drink lots of water or other calorie-free fluids.
- Avoid foods with more than 2 grams of added sugar.
- Enjoy no-added-sugar treats in moderation.
- Limit foods that are high in fat.
- Enjoy small portions of high quality, delicious and nutritious foods.

## MAY Attitude is Everything

Develop a healthy mindset. Positive thoughts promote positive actions that lead to a healthy weight.

What we think determines what happens to us, so if we want to change our lives, we need to stretch our minds.  
—Dr. Wayne Dyer

Take a quick inventory of your thoughts, attitudes and behaviors and then try the following ideas to align your attitude with the weight loss success you desire.

- List the things that you are grateful for. This may include things like fitting in the bathtub, buying clothing in a 'regular' size, taking less medication, or being able to move with less/no pain. Post this somewhere that you will see it throughout the day.
- Notice your thoughts. When you catch yourself saying, "I hate to exercise," replace that thought with, "I am excited that I can walk through the neighborhood."
- Look for opportunities to enjoy and share delicious sugar-free foods with others. Family gatherings, work, and special occasions are all opportunities.
- Surround yourself with positive support people.
- There will be trying or frustrating situations. Choose not to focus on these. Keep your focus on the healthful behaviors that are going to help you reach your goal.

If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.

## JUNE Summer Activities

The days are long and the sun is bright; summer is a great time to take your health and fitness goals to the next level. Have fun by incorporating activity into your lifestyle.

- Energize your day with an early morning walk as the sun rises, and enjoy the peaceful quiet of the morning before the hustle and bustle of the day gets started and the temperature soars.
- Play like a kid and jump on a trampoline; skip rope; play 4-square; shoot some hoops; get a game of Marco Polo going in the pool – cannon ball, anyone?; ride a bike; or play tag. You'll have a blast.
- Look for summer activities offered through your community education

programs. You'll meet some new people and have a great time.

- Swim laps, walk through the shallow end, tread water, do jumping jacks or take a water aerobics class. You'll stay nice and cool as you burn calories and tone muscles.
- Plan an active vacation. Hike in the mountains, canoe in the rivers and lakes, swim in the ocean, shop until you drop. Whatever activities you love to do, vacations are a great time to be active.

## JULY Hydrate Right

You can't beat water as a perfect hydrator. And although single-serving bottled water is the ultimate in convenience, there are certainly reasons to not go that route. There's the cost, the environmental factors and the fact that chemicals from the plastic can seep into the water if it sits in the sun. Instead choose a re-useable water bottle (BPA-free plastic or stainless steel). At home try a water carafe and filter or an in-sink filtration system to get the freshest-tasting water. Get in the habit of sipping water throughout the day.



If you like a little flavor in your water, making your own Kool-Aid with Splenda or Stevia allows you to control the sweetness and save money.

Remember the 5/30 rule when drinking. Stop drinking 5 minutes before you eat and don't start again until 30 minutes after you finish a meal. This keeps you from over-filling your pouch or sleeve and forcing food out of the stomach.

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Your surgery is very good at restricting the calories from solid foods, but not from liquids, so be sure that most things that you drink are very low in calories or calorie-free. Exceptions to this are a glass of milk or a protein shake as one of your six meals.

## AUGUST Make a Connection

Connecting with others who have had weight loss surgery can be encouraging, whether you are getting or giving support. No one really understands the physical and emotional changes of



weight loss surgery unless they have gone through it. Right before or after surgery, you may be the one looking for support. Later on, you may be the one to provide confidence, encouragement or information.

The Barix Clinics forums ([www.forums.barixclinics.com](http://www.forums.barixclinics.com)) and Facebook page are great opportunities for you to connect with other Barix Clinics patients. Support groups are another avenue if you live near one of the hospitals.

In addition to peer support, connecting with one of the Barix nutritionists can be helpful. Sometimes when people need support, they hesitate to reach out. Don't hesitate—this support is here for you by phone, email or in-person contact.

## SEPTEMBER Try New Recipes

Sometimes it is hard to find healthy recipes that the entire family loves. But now, more than ever, it is easy to find healthy recipes worth trying. Not only does a quick internet search provide you with a multitude of recipe options, but these recipes are now reviewed, so

before you take the plunge you can see what other people thought and how they modified the recipe.

The World According to Eggface (link to: <http://theworldaccordingtoeggface.blogspot.com>) has amazingly creative recipes that are generally high in protein and small in portion size.

Finding low-sugar dessert treat recipes can really help for special celebrations and family gatherings.

Some recipes come with the nutrition facts calculated for you so you can see how they fit into your plan, or you can use one of the free recipe analyzers online.

To eat homemade meals more often, consider cooking extra on the weekend for busy weekdays, using a slow cooker, prepping the night before, planning ahead so ingredients are ready-to-go, and keeping it simple.

## OCTOBER Find New Products

One of the benefits of connecting with other weight loss surgery patients is that you hear about new products that work well after surgery. It may be a compartmentalized lunch box, an accurate pedometer, the best sugar-free chocolate, a yummy new protein bar, or something else that makes your post-WLS life better.

Think of one new product each week that would make your life easier, tastier, or more productive and seek out a new product that will fit the bill. Network with others, search the internet, and scour the stores. Having the right product to get the job done can make all the difference.

## NOVEMBER Track It

Tracking your food intake and activity is a powerful tool after weight loss surgery. The simple act of recording makes you very aware of your behaviors. And it is amazing how this alone can change behavior right away. And then looking at these behaviors over time can identify patterns that

are helping or hindering your health efforts. Eating right and moving more are a winning combination and tracking helps you to do both.

There is no right or wrong way to go about tracking. Find something that works for you, from a notebook to a digital option, and stick with it.

## DECEMBER Stress Less

Stress, if not managed, can affect our health in many ways. It can put you at higher risk for heart disease, sleep problems, digestive problems, depression, obesity, and memory impairment, and it can cause an increase in symptoms of many health conditions that you already have. Common reactions to stress include eating more; eating not-so-healthy foods; impatience, anger, tears, negative thinking; numbing with alcohol, drugs or oversleeping. Rather than giving in to unhealthy ways of dealing with stress, develop healthy ways to minimize stress and to cope with the stress you cannot control.

- Have a plan for stressful situations that cannot change right away. Just putting a plan in place can lower your sense of stress.
- Regular exercise lowers stress hormones and makes you feel better.
- Get enough sleep. The world often looks brighter after a good night's sleep.
- Prayer and/or meditation can significantly reduce stress.
- Focus on all of the things that are going right. Often the bad stuff gets all of our attention and we forget about the good stuff.
- Keep organized. Disorganization can breed stress.
- Assess your reaction to stressful situations. Stress isn't an event or situation; it comes from your reaction to that event or situation.

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On Track With Barix

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## RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

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, and Pennsylvania. *Call us today for more information!*

## SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

Tell us about how your life has changed as a result of your weight loss surgery. Your story may be printed in this publication or on one of our websites and can serve as an inspiration to others.

Submit your story online ([http://www.barixclinicsstore.com/share\\_your\\_story.html](http://www.barixclinicsstore.com/share_your_story.html)).

We'd love to hear from you.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT FINANCING YOUR SURGERY?

Call a Barix Patient Service Representative at 800-282-0066

## Easy Black Bean Soup

3-15 oz cans black beans, organic with liquid  
 ½ cup cilantro, fresh  
 1 clove garlic, minced  
 2 ½ cups salsa  
 2 tsp cumin, ground  
 ½ cup sour cream, fat-free

Stir all ingredients except the sour cream into a pot. Heat to simmering. Lower heat to medium low, cover and simmer for at least 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Dish into bowls and top with a dollop of sour cream. Makes 8 servings. Using organic black beans keeps the sodium content low.

**NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING:** 189 calories, 10 grams protein, 0 grams fat, 31 grams carbohydrates, 68 grams sodium.

## Orange Fantasy

Submitted by Lydia C.

1-25 oz can mandarin oranges in own juices  
 1-15 oz container cottage cheese, fat-free  
 1-8 oz container sugar-free Cool Whip  
 1 small box sugar-free orange gelatin (dry)

Mix the first three ingredients together; pour dry gelatin straight from box over mixture and stir in. Decorate top of Fantasy with some of the orange slices and chill. Best served after chilling overnight. Makes 8 servings.

**NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING:** 131 calories, 6 grams protein, 4 grams fat, 22 grams carbohydrate and 174 mg sodium.

## It Worked for Me

Submitted by Sharon F.

I find the presweetened protein drinks way too sweet for my taste. Instead of morning coffee, I mix together my own high-protein mocha in a Blender Bottle. I put all the ingredients in, shake it up and take it with me on my morning drive. I measure a week's worth of the dry ingredients into individual small plastic containers every weekend to save myself time during the week.

I also keep an emergency stash at work (minus the instant coffee) for sweets cravings. If there are donuts or cookies at work and I find myself tempted, I pull out a baggie of the mixed ingredients and mix it with an 8 oz box of shelf-stable low-fat milk.

### Sharon's not-too-sweet protein recipe:

- 1 scoop unflavored whey protein powder
- 1 heaping tsp cocoa
- 1 level tsp instant coffee, regular or decaf (optional)
- 1 packet Splenda or sweetener of your choice
- 8 oz skim (nonfat) milk

