



SandyMartínez, MD
BARIATRIC SURGEON



Your Pre-Operative Blueprint: BMI 46-50

The 21-Day Metabolic Transformation

Welcome to the active phase of your bariatric transformation. Because your BMI is between 46 and 50, your body requires a highly structured, **21-day metabolic transformation** to safely prepare for surgery. This three-week window is the most critical commitment you will make in your entire journey.

The Medical Purpose: Why Exactly 21 Days? When you carry excess weight, your liver stores a significant amount of excess fat and becomes heavily enlarged (Fatty Liver). Because your liver sits directly over your stomach, a heavy, enlarged liver makes laparoscopic surgery extremely difficult and increases the risk of complications.

By strictly eliminating carbohydrates and sugars for exactly 21 days, your body will completely deplete its glycogen (stored sugar) reserves. Once those reserves are empty, your body is forced to aggressively burn the fat trapped inside your liver. This effectively "shrinks" your liver, making it lighter and significantly safer for Dr. Sandy to lift and maneuver. A smaller liver guarantees a faster surgery, minimal tissue trauma, and a much smoother, less painful recovery for you.

Dr. Sandy's Pro-Tip: *"Three weeks requires true dedication. When motivation naturally wanes around Day 10, remember your 'Why.' Write down three things you want to achieve after losing the weight—whether it's playing with your kids, traveling comfortably on an airplane, or getting off blood pressure medications—and stick that note on your fridge right next to this diet plan! Your mindset dictates your outcome."*

The 21-Day Liver Shrinking Protocol

Days 21 to 3 Before Surgery

For the first 19 days of this diet, your daily intake will consist of **2 to 3 solid lean meals** AND **1 to 2 protein shakes**. Consistency is your greatest weapon. A single "cheat meal" with

carbohydrates will instantly refill your liver with glycogen and water, undoing days of hard work.

THE GREEN LIGHT (Eat Abundantly & Safely):

- **Lean Proteins (4-7 oz per meal):** Chicken breast, turkey breast, white fish, salmon, shrimp, 90/10 lean ground beef, eggs, or tofu. (*Bariatric Rule: Always eat your protein first to protect your muscle mass*).
- **Unlimited Non-Starchy Veggies:** Spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini, celery, asparagus, green beans, and bell peppers. Fill half your plate with these!
- **Healthy Fats (1 serving daily):** Half an avocado, 1 tablespoon of olive oil, or a small handful of plain almonds/walnuts.
- **US Protein Shakes:** Ready-to-drink options are easiest. Look for *Fairlife Nutrition Plan*, *Premier Protein*, or *Isopure*. (**Golden Rule: Your shake MUST have $\geq 20\text{g}$ of protein and $\leq 5\text{g}$ of sugar per serving**).

STRICTLY PROHIBITED (The Red Light):

- All forms of sugar and sweets.
- Bread, rice, pasta, tortillas, oats, and cereals.
- Starchy vegetables: Potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, and peas.
- Dairy milk and full-fat cheeses (these stall fat burning).
- Alcohol and all caffeinated beverages.

Navigating the "Week 2 Slump"

Three weeks is the exact amount of time it takes for the human brain to build a new habit. You are literally rewiring your relationship with food before surgery! However, around Week 2, boredom often sets in. Here is how to beat the slump:

- **Change Your Environment:** Remove all junk food, sweets, and trigger foods from your pantry. If it is not in the house, you cannot eat it.
- **Focus on NSVs (Non-Scale Victories):** Stop stepping on the scale every day. Weight fluctuates naturally. Instead, focus on how your clothes fit, how your joints feel, and how your energy levels stabilize as you detox from sugar spikes.
- **Master the Bariatric Basics: * The 30/30 Rule:** Stop drinking all liquids 30 minutes before a meal, and wait 30 minutes after eating to drink again. Never wash your food down.
 - **The "Bariatric Chew":** Chew every single bite 20 to 30 times until it reaches an applesauce consistency. Digestion now starts entirely in your mouth.

21-Day Boredom-Buster Meal Hacks

Eating chicken and broccoli for 3 weeks gets repetitive. Use these US-grocery hacks to keep your meals exciting without breaking the medical rules:

- **1. The "Costco Rotisserie" Hack:** Buy a plain rotisserie chicken from Costco or your local supermarket (ensure it has no sugary glazes like BBQ or Teriyaki). Shred the breast meat. Use it over a spinach salad or eat it cold with a side of avocado. It saves hours of cooking and keeps you on track when you're tired.
- **2. "Egg Roll in a Bowl" (Asian Cravings Fix):** Brown 1 lb of 93/7 lean ground turkey in a pan. Add garlic and 1 bag of dry, pre-shredded coleslaw mix (cabbage and carrots only—throw away the dressing packet!). Sauté until soft. Add low-sodium soy sauce and a tiny drop of sesame oil. It tastes exactly like the inside of an egg roll with zero carbs!
- **3. The Savory Shake Hack:** If you are exhausted from drinking sweet vanilla or chocolate shakes, swap one out for a high-protein bone broth. Brands like *Kettle & Fire* or *Vital Proteins* make excellent savory bone broths packing up to 10-19g of protein per serving. Warm it up in a mug for a comforting, savory protein boost.

Your Pre-Surgical Medical Timeline

Your surgical safety depends entirely on following these exact medical milestones. You must strictly adhere to this timeline to prevent severe complications, excessive bleeding, or anesthesia risks.

2 Months Prior – The Clean Start

- **STOP all nicotine products (Smoking, Vaping, Patches).** * *Medical Reason:* Nicotine severely constricts blood vessels, drastically reducing oxygen flow to your stomach tissue. This prevents healing and increases the risk of life-threatening stomach leaks and ulcers. Ask your primary care provider for Chantix and Wellbutrin; these two medications taken together are highly effective in stopping nicotine cravings.

14 Days Prior – The Internal Cleanse

- **STOP all vitamins and herbal supplements.** (Many natural herbs unpredictably thin the blood).
- **DISCONTINUE oral birth control and FEMALE supplemental hormones.** (*Note: IUDs and arm implants are completely safe and do not need to be removed*).
- **NO alcohol, marijuana, or THC products.** These alter liver enzymes, significantly increasing bleeding risks and interfering dangerously with the anesthesiologist's ability to keep you safely sedated.
- **DISCONTINUE all products with caffeine.** Caffeine is a diuretic that causes your body to flush out water, leading to dehydration. Switch to decaf coffee immediately to avoid massive caffeine withdrawal headaches while in the hospital.

7 Days Prior – Medication Safety

- **STOP specific medications:** Coumadin, ANY ANTICOAGULANTS, or BLOOD THINNERS (Xarelto, Plavix, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, Nuprin, Aleve, or any other NSAID).

- *Medical Reason:* These medications are highly irritating to the stomach lining and cause severe postoperative bleeding. Remember, this includes baby Aspirin and most arthritis medications. (If you have questions about mandatory prescription medications, contact our medical team immediately).

2 Days Prior: The Clear Liquid Phase

Exactly **48 hours before your scheduled surgery**, you must **STOP ALL SOLID FOODS** and thick protein shakes. You will transition immediately to a strict clear liquid diet. This critical phase empties your digestive tract completely, preventing life-threatening infections during your procedure.

What is a "Clear Liquid"? *If you can hold the liquid up to the light and see through it, it is allowed.*

You may ONLY consume:

- Water and Sugar-Free Electrolytes (Crystal Light, Gatorade Zero, Propel).
- Clear chicken, beef, or vegetable broth (Strained thoroughly; absolutely no noodles or vegetable chunks).
- Apple juice or Cranberry juice (Must be diluted: 60% water / 40% juice).
- Sugar-free Jell-O and Sugar-free popsicles (No fruit chunks or creamy centers).
- Decaf black coffee or herbal tea (No milk, no cream, no sugar).

8 Hours Prior: The Final Race (NPO)

- **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING BY MOUTH.**
- Do not consume even a single sip of water, ice chips, mints, or gum after midnight preceding your surgery.
- **NO MEDICATIONS** unless explicitly directed by Dr. Sandy or our anesthesiologist.

Medical Reason: This is the most important rule of your entire journey. If there is even a drop of fluid or stomach acid in your stomach when anesthesia is administered, it can travel up your throat and into your lungs (Aspiration Pneumonia), which is a fatal emergency. **If you drink water or chew gum during this 8-hour window, your surgery will be canceled immediately for your own safety.**

IMPORTANT CHECKLIST BEFORE YOU TRAVEL: Please bring ALL your prescribed medications (whether you are currently taking them or not) in their original, properly labeled pharmaceutical bottles for documentation during your Pre-Op testing at the hospital. Do NOT take any medications after surgery until you have consulted directly with Dr. Sandy.