

Aspirating Tips & Tricks

Congratulations on your decision to take control of your weight loss and embark on this journey!
Here are 7 tips to help you learn to use the system effectively.

1 ASPIRATE AFTER MAJOR MEALS OR SNACKS, ABOUT 2-3 TIMES PER DAY.

For some people, this might mean three regular meals per day. For others, it might include a mid-afternoon snack or an after-dinner treat. Have a few appetizers and a glass of wine at happy hour? This can be more calories than you think, so don't forget to aspirate! Over time, you'll learn to reduce the frequency of aspiration by making lifestyle changes - eating smaller portions and choosing healthy low-calorie snacks.



2 CHEW, CHEW, CHEW! Remember that everything you eat needs to fit through the tube.

This requires more time and patience than you might think at first, but it makes the aspiration process much easier and quicker (and it helps you eat slowly, so you feel full faster). You'll know you've chewed enough when the tube doesn't clog (water can drain out easily) and you can aspirate in 5-10 minutes. Some people find there are foods that do not drain well - but if your list of "difficult" foods is more than a couple things, you are probably not chewing well enough yet.



3 STAY HYDRATED. Drink water before, during, and after meals. It helps you feel fuller and helps you aspirate more easily. Try drinking a glass of water right before aspirating - some people find it helps flush things out more quickly.



4 TIMING IS EVERYTHING. For most people, waiting 20 minutes after finishing a meal to aspirate is just about right. This gives enough time for the stomach to begin breaking down food to help it fit through the tube. If you wait too long, the calories will be absorbed by the body. But, some people find that certain foods aspirate better if they wait longer - like closer to an hour - and other foods need to be aspirated right away to prevent absorption (like a sugary dessert).



5 USE THE RESERVOIR WISELY.

- **Use Short Bursts:** Squeeze in a third of the reservoir at a time, instead of the whole bottle. These short bursts of water help to clear clogs without making you feel too full.
- **Allow for Mixing:** After squeezing water, it might help to wait a few seconds to allow the water to mix with the food in your stomach - try pressing your stomach with your hands (around the tube site) or shifting positions to help the mixing along.
- **Refill the Reservoir:** Refill the reservoir several times until you've aspirated fully.

6 BE CREATIVE.

Everyone is different, and finds different techniques to help aspirate more efficiently. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Squeeze your abdominal muscles
- Squeeze the Connector Tube, then release & repeat to encourage flow.
- Shift positions or lean to the side.
- Rotating the Connector - this rotates the tube in your stomach to move the holes to a different position. Be careful to not pull the Skin-Port to the side while doing this.



7 GET SUPPORT.

Visit the community forum, AspireTalk (talk.aspirebariatrics.com) to share your experiences with other AspireAssist patients, and ask any questions you have. Someone else has probably had a similar experience, and can be a valuable resource for you.

FAQs

HOW LONG SHOULD IT TAKE TO ASPIRATE?

Most people find that it takes less than 10 minutes, but it varies by how much you've eaten and how thoroughly you aspirate. A small breakfast might only take a few minutes, and a big dinner might take closer to 10 minutes. Also, there's a difference between a complete and partial aspiration - and the more time you put in, the more you'll get out!

HOW DO I KNOW WHEN I'M FINISHED ASPIRATING?

You should see clear water draining, and your stomach should feel empty. You will get a sense of what you've eaten, and be able to tell from the toilet contents if you've a good portion of food out.

I'M GOING OUT TO DINNER AT A RESTAURANT. DO I HAVE TO ASPIRATE?

No. If you cannot aspirate at the restaurant, choose sometime healthy and be mindful of the portion size. You can also try to aspirate when you come home - aspirating an hour later is better than not at all.

AFTER I SQUEEZE WATER IN, I'M ONLY GETTING CLEAR WATER OUT. I KNOW THERE'S MORE FOOD IN MY STOMACH THOUGH. HOW CAN I GET IT OUT?

The water from the reservoir is probably not mixing well with the food, and is just coming straight out. Try waiting a moment after squeezing water in - and use that time to help it mix: Press on your stomach, change positions, squeeze your abdominal muscles. You should see solid food mixed with the water when you aspirate effectively.

AFTER I SQUEEZE WATER IN, IT CLOGS UP AND I CAN'T SEEM TO GET WATER OR FOOD OUT. NOW MY STOMACH FEELS UNCOMFORTABLY FULL AND NOTHING WILL COME OUT. WHAT HAPPENED?

This means there are pieces of food in the stomach that are too big to fit into the tube, and those pieces are clogging the tube. Unfortunately, if your stomach is too full to infuse more water, you may have to stop aspirating and let the food digest normally. Next time, try chewing even more thoroughly. There are some foods that may be difficult to chew thoroughly, so keep track of when this happens. Also, only squeeze a portion of the reservoir at a time, to keep from getting uncomfortably full when it clogs.

WHEN I ATTACH THE SYSTEM, NOTHING COMES OUT -ALMOST LIKE THE VALVE ISN'T "OPEN". WHAT'S GOING ON?

Check that the lever on the connector is turned all the way. It needs to be rotated until it stops, even past the "click".