Eating to Heal

- Eat foods that will help your body heal. Good choices are protein-rich foods, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products.
- Eat at least three times a day. Don’t skip meals.
- Include protein-rich foods with each meal. Some healthy choices are lean meat, fish, poultry, beans, eggs, cheese, nuts, tofu, milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, and protein drinks.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 eight-ounce cups of fluid each day to stay well hydrated.
- Add a daily protein drink if you cannot eat enough food.
- Before your surgery, avoid foods that increase the inflammatory response.
  Foods that increase the inflammatory response include refined carbohydrates, such as sugar and white flour; saturated fats from red meat and organ meats; trans fats from commercially baked cookies, cakes and pastries; and alcohol.
- For your final meal before surgery, eat a light dinner consisting of easily digestible foods. Foods that are easily and quickly digested include fruits, juices and water and non-starchy vegetables. Foods high in fats and fiber are difficult to digest and should be avoided. Avoid dairy products and spicy foods as they can also affect digestion.
- Vitamin C and zinc are also essential for wound healing. Food sources of vitamin C include spinach, potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, oranges and cantaloupe. Beans are a good source of zinc on the vegetarian diet.