

**Feeding Instructions for Patients
Having Routine
(Non-Emergency)
Operations**

Date: March 2007
Review Date: March 2009
Authors: Dr A Dobson
Dr C Booth

Reasons why fasting is required for surgical procedures:

- You may require a general anaesthetic for your operation, even if you are due to have a local or regional anaesthetic
- It is important to have an empty stomach as this reduces the risk of vomiting while under anaesthetic
- Following these instructions will ensure that you are ready for you anaesthetic

For these reasons we ask that you have nothing to **eat** for 6 hours before your operation. Any drink with milk in or that is very sweet or fizzy or that has 'bits' in, should be thought of as food and must not be drunk within 6 hours of the operation.

Chewing gum is not allowed within 2 hours of your operation.

You may **drink** clear fluids up till 2 hours before the operation. Examples of clear fluids are water, black tea/coffee, dilute squash.

In practice, this means following these simple rules:

- If you are coming in for an operation in the morning, you are allowed to eat till 2.30am. You are allowed to drink clear fluids till 06.30am.
- If you are coming in for an operation in the afternoon, you are allowed to eat till 07.30am. You are allowed to drink clear fluids till 11.30am.
- **It is important that if you do eat or drink within the above times that you inform the ward staff and anaesthetist.**

If you want to discuss any of this advice, or need any points explaining, please contact the ward where you're due to be admitted.

If, during your hospital stay, you feel that you have had to fast for longer than you expected, please ask one of the nursing or medical staff to explain the reasons for this.

	Food & Drink (inc. Formula Milk)	Clear Fluids*
Hours before your operation	6	2
Latest time for morning operation	02.30	06.30
Latest time for afternoon operation	07.30	11.30

*Acceptable clear fluids:
Water/Black Coffee/Tea with no milk
Dilute Squash (not fruit juice)

ALL OTHER FLUIDS ARE UNACCEPTABLE

Chewing Gum is not permitted within 2 hours of Surgery

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