

Eating and Drinking Before Surgery

Patient Instructions

You will be asked to not eat or drink before your surgery or procedure.

Why is this important?

- You will be receiving medications (called anesthesia) for your procedure.
- If you have food or liquid in your stomach when you receive anesthesia, some of it could get into your lungs. This is called “aspiration”.
- Although aspiration is rare, if it happens it can cause an infection, lung damage or breathing problems.

Food

You may have anything you like up until nine hours before your scheduled procedure time.

If you received specific instructions for bowel prep, please follow them.

Drink

You may have clear liquids until *three hours* before your surgery time.

This should contain sugar and electrolytes. We recommend that you drink at least eight ounces three to four hours before your procedure.

Anything containing solids like fats or proteins could cause a delay in your surgery.

Examples of non-clear liquids to avoid:

- Any dairy or nondairy creamer
- Beef and chicken broth containing fat
- Orange juice

Examples of a clear liquid:

- Gatorade or a similar sports drink containing electrolytes is preferred
- Water
- Black coffee or tea (sugar or honey without honeycomb are allowed)
- Cranberry juice, grape juice or apple juice
- Jell-O without any solids in it
- Soft drinks

Medications, tobacco, alcohol, recreational drugs

- Before surgery, your routine medication instructions will be discussed with your Pre-Anesthesia Testing (PAT) nurse.
- No tobacco or vaping after midnight the night before your surgery.
- No marijuana or alcohol three days before surgery.
- Please speak with your doctor about any other recreational drug use.

For more information about these instructions, please contact the doctor doing your procedure.