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FASTING
FOR SPECIFIC ADVICE, SPEAK TO THE ANAESTHETIST

Procedure time

The starting time for your child's surgery will be advised either by our rooms or by the anaesthetist on the day before surgery. This is the "procedure time" referred to below. When your child needs to fast will depend upon this procedure time.

Why does your child have to stop eating and drinking before surgery?

If there is food or liquid in your child's stomach when it is time to have the general anaesthetic, it could come back up and enter their lungs as they go to sleep. This can cause serious damage. We do understand that it is difficult for a child to stop eating and drinking before their procedure, but it is very important for their safety that you follow the fasting instructions that you are given. If your child has not fasted properly, their procedure may be delayed to later in the day or cancelled.

Why are fasting times different for food and drink?

Clear fluids pass through the stomach faster than food so they can safely be consumed closer to the time of the procedure.

What clear fluids can your child drink?

Clear fluids recommended are:
- Water
- Clear (**pulp-free**) apple juice

Please avoid giving your child any other types of drink not recommended above.

When should your child stop eating and drinking before the surgery?

Sticking to the following fasting instructions will not only ensure your child is safe to have anaesthetic, but will also help to minimise the time they need to fast.

<u>FOR BABIES (SIX MONTHS & UNDER)</u>

Six hours before the procedure time
If your baby is awake six hours before the procedure time, they can have food, formula and drink. **No further food** can be given after this time.

Four hours before the procedure time
Please **wake your baby** for a breastfeed or formula four hours before the procedure time. Do not add thickeners. This will be your baby's last milk feed before surgery.

Until the time you arrive at the admission location
You can offer your baby **clear fluids until the time** you arrive at the admission location.

Your baby **must not** eat or drink anything else after you arrive at the admission location, unless this has been allowed by the nursing or medical staff.

<u>FOR CHILDREN & FOR BABIES (OLDER THAN SIX MONTHS)</u>

Six hours before the procedure time
If your baby or child is awake six hours before the procedure time, they can have food, formula and drink. **No further food** can be given after this time.

Please note that:
- lollies are considered food;
- chewing gum may be swallowed accidentally and is considered food;
- thickeners and jellies are considered food.

Four hours before the procedure time
Please **wake your baby or child** for a breastfeed (no formula) four hours before the procedure time. Do not add thickeners. This will be their last milk feed before surgery.

Until the time you arrive at the admission location
You can offer your baby or child **clear fluids until the time** you arrive at the admission location.

Your baby or child **must not** eat or drink anything else after you arrive at the admission location, unless this has been allowed by the nursing or medical staff.

Can my child take medication while fasting?

Please continue your child's usual medications, including those that would normally be taken on the day of surgery, unless told otherwise by a doctor or nurse. Take liquid medicines as usual and tablets can be taken with a sip of water or other clear fluid when fasting.

When you come to the hospital, please bring a list of medications your child has recently been taking, including herbal medicines and supplements.

Please DO NOT give your child Nurofen/ibruprofen in the 72 hours before their surgery.

Please stop giving your child all fish oils and garlic supplements at least one week before surgery.

Your surgical team will provide you with information specific to aspirin if your child takes this regularly.