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## FASTING

### FOR SPECIFIC ADVICE, SPEAK TO YOUR ANAESTHETIST

#### Procedure time

The starting time for your 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 you need to fast will depend upon this procedure time.

#### Why do you have to stop eating and drinking before surgery?

If there is food or liquid in your stomach when it is time to have the general anaesthetic, it could come back up and enter your lungs as you go to sleep. This can cause serious damage. If you do not follow the fasting instructions, your 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 you drink?

Clear fluids recommended are:

- Water
- Clear (**pulp-free**) apple juice

Please avoid drinking any fluids not listed above.

#### When should you stop eating and drinking before the surgery?

At least six hours before the procedure time. The general advice is:

- if your surgery is before 1:00PM, fast from midnight – this means no food and only sips of **clear fluids** until your admission; and
- if your surgery is at 1:00PM or later, you can have a **light breakfast** which is to be finished before 7:00AM and then no food and only sips of **clear fluids** until your admission.



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Please note that:

- lollies are considered food;
- chewing gum may be swallowed accidentally and is considered food. It also increases stomach acid production; and
- thickeners and jellies are considered food.

## **Can you smoke or vape while fasting?**

**NO**, smoking (cigarettes) and vaping (e-cigarettes) increase the risk of heart attacks while under a general anaesthetic. Please do not smoke or vape while in your fasting window.

## **Can you take medication while fasting?**

**Please continue your 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 you have recently been taking, including herbal medicines and supplements.

**Please do not take Nurofen/Ibuprofen in the 72 hours before surgery.**

**Please stop taking all fish oils and garlic supplements at least one week before surgery.**

**Your surgical team will provide you with information specific to aspirin and other blood thinning medications if you take these regularly.**

