

# Eating and Drinking Before Surgery: Patient Instructions

Bring these instructions to all appointments leading up to your surgery.

**Non-Diabetic**  
With Bowel Prep  
Fasting Only



Follow these instructions carefully or your surgery may be cancelled. This is for your safety to prevent food or fluid from going into your lungs (aspiration). *If you have any questions, please call* \_\_\_\_\_ at ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

(Department Name)

\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

Surgery Time

AM

Get your Surgery Time 1–2 days before your surgery.

PM

Call: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_



**1 Follow bowel prep instructions given by your Surgeon or Pre-admission Clinic (PAC).**

\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

Surgery Time minus 3 hours

**2 Drink clear fluids until 3 hours before Surgery Time.**



Clear fluids are water, apple juice, cranberry cocktail, black coffee or plain tea. Do **not** add milk or cream to your coffee or tea.

**STOP** drinking 3 hours before Surgery Time.

\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

Surgery Time minus \_\_\_\_ hours

**3 Arrive at \_\_\_\_\_ Hospital.**

(Facility Name)

# Eating and Drinking Before Surgery: Patient Questions and Answers

## Why do I need to follow instructions about eating and drinking before surgery?

It is important to follow the instructions for what to eat and drink before your surgery and when to stop. When food is in your stomach too close to your Surgery Time, you may vomit. If this happens, the vomit could spill into your lungs (aspiration) and affect your breathing as well as cause damage to your lungs.



**Aspiration during surgery is dangerous and can cause death.**

## What happens if I drink past the 3-hour limit?

If you drink past the recommended time limit, there is a chance your surgery will be cancelled and rescheduled. This is to ensure your safety during the surgery.

## Why do I need to drink clear fluids before surgery?

Drinking clear fluids before your surgery helps your body stay hydrated and get ready for surgery.

## What types of fluids should I avoid before surgery?

- Orange juice or juice with pulp
- Dairy products/milk
- Coffee or tea with milk or cream
- Alcohol for at least 24 hours



**STOP drinking alcohol 24 hours before your surgery.**