

# Fasting guidelines for all patients having an anaesthetic

- The goal of these guidelines is to minimise the fasting times for clear fluids to 2 hours.
- Only the anaesthetist may adjust these guidelines.
- If a patient appears likely to fast for much longer than these times then please contact the anaesthetist. (see below)

## Elective surgery and anaesthesia

### Children less than 6 months of age:

- Please plan for the last breast feed to finish no later than **3 Hours** before anaesthesia.
- Please plan for a formula or cow's milk feed to finish no later than **4 Hours** before anaesthesia.

### All other patients:

- Please do not give milk drinks, food, lollies or chewing gum for **6 Hours** before anaesthesia.
- Please offer clear fluids up to **2 Hours** before anaesthesia.

### Oral Medication:

- Please continue regular oral medications unless otherwise requested by the anaesthetist.
- Medications can be taken with a sip of clear fluid.

### Patients with a specific (staggered) admission time:

- The fasting orders above should be applied to that admission time.

### Patients on a morning or afternoon list:

- **Morning Operation:** List starts at 0830:  
Please fast from 0230 for food or milk and continue clear fluids until 0630
- **Afternoon Operation:** List starts at 1330:  
Please fast from 0730 for food or milk and continue clear fluids until 1130
- **Cardiac Surgery:** List starts at 0800:  
Please fast from 0200 for food or milk, and continue clear fluids until 0600

## Emergency surgery and anaesthesia

The fasting plan should be discussed at booking. Whilst awaiting surgery the fasting plan should be reviewed at intervals with the duty anaesthetist to minimise dehydration. See below for contact details

## Definitions

**Clear fluids** are those fluids which, when held to the light, are transparent. They include glucose-based drinks, cordials and clear juices. They do **not** include particulate or milk-based products.

**Diabetes Mellitus** patients will have special requirements and the anaesthetist of the day should be consulted

## Contacting the anaesthetist

For elective cases the **anaesthetist for the list** should be contacted first for all queries regarding patient's fasting. Please use the paging system.

For emergency cases or when unable to contact the elective list anaesthetist you can call the **in charge anaesthetist** on extension 5240. After hours contact the duty trainee on page 5773