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***Why can’t I eat or drink before my procedure?***

Fasting means going without all food and liquid. Sometimes in hospital we call this "Nil by Mouth". It is a medical instruction to stop food and drinks. Fasting is needed before general anaesthesia or sedation medicine. This will reduce the risk of vomiting and breathing in food or fluid into the lungs.

**Before your surgery:**

* You can have solid food until 6 hours before surgery - this should be a light meal
* Do not chew gum or lollies- these count as food because they cause the stomach to produce extra acid

Patients can have special fluids (called Preoperative oral fluids) until 2 hours before surgery. This should be no more than 2 cups or 400mls.

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| **Preoperative oral fluids can include =** | **Preoperative oral fluids must not include =** |
| * Water * Tea/Coffee- without milk (may add sugar/sweetener) * Apple juice, other pulp free fruit juice or cordial * Clear lemonade with no pulp * Commercial rehydration fluids such as “Hydralyte” * Fat-free, protein-free nutritional supplements such as “preOp” brand drink * Sports drinks such as “Gatorade”- light colours only * Ice blocks made from any of the above clear fluids * Coconut Water | * Alcohol- never just before surgery * Fat * Protein * Insoluble fibre such as “Metamucil” * Prune juice, tomato juice or orange juice with pulp * Coconut Milk * Nectar, canned and fresh fruits * Thickened fluids * Milkshakes or smoothies * Drinks that are red, blue or purple in colour (even if these drinks are clear) * Cream, milk or soy protein |

***What about my regular medications?***

**ALL** fasting patients must have their regular oral medications with a sip of water, even when fasting (unless you have been told otherwise by your medical team- for example oral diabetic medications, blood thinners etc may be withheld before surgery). Always check with your nurse, doctor or GP.

**PLEASE FOLLOW THESE FASTING INSTRUCTIONS VERY CAREFULLY OR YOUR SURGERY MAY BE POSTPONED OR CANCELLED. THIS IS TO HELP KEEP YOU SAFE.**