

Eating and Drinking Before Surgery: Patient Instructions

Non-Diabetic

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



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: () _____ - _____

____ : ____

Surgery Time minus 8 hours

1 Eat an optional final snack 8 hours before Surgery Time.

You may eat a final snack as long as it is at least 8 hours before your Surgery Time.

Final snacks are either



- 1 small piece of fruit and 1 cup cereal with ½ cup milk, or
- 1 small piece of fruit and 1 slice of toast with jam and ½ cup yogurt

STOP eating after the final snack.

____ : ____

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.

____ : ____

Surgery Time minus 3 hours

3 Drink an optional 500 mL (2 cups) of clear apple juice or cranberry cocktail at 3 hours before Surgery Time.



Do **not** drink a diet, sugar free, low calorie or energy drink.

STOP drinking after the 500 mL (2 cups) of clear juice.

____ : ____

Surgery Time minus ____ hours

4 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 eat past the 8-hour limit or drink past the 3-hour limit?

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

What food should I avoid for the final snack before surgery?

Avoid fatty foods in your final snack such as

- Meat
- Eggs
- Fried food
- Margarine or butter
- Peanut butter
- Other nut butters

Why do I need to eat a final snack and drink clear fluids before surgery?

Eating and drinking the right things before your surgery helps your body get ready for surgery, stay hydrated and have enough energy after 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.

Why do I need to drink 500 mL (2 cups) of clear apple juice or cranberry cocktail 3 hours before surgery?

Drinking 500 mL (2 cups) of clear apple juice or cranberry cocktail 3 hours before your Surgery Time is called carbohydrate loading (carb loading). Carb loading helps your body have enough energy to get through the physical stress of surgery. The extra energy helps you begin your recovery immediately after surgery.