When You’re On Call for Surgery

What does being on call mean?
When you’re on call for surgery, it means that you’re on a list waiting for a block of time for your operation. Sometimes the wait can be longer than expected.

Why would I be on call?
You can be on call for a few reasons:
• there are others who also need urgent or unplanned surgery
• your surgery doesn’t have to be done right away
• you may be too sick for surgery right now, but will have it as soon as you are stable

Can my surgery still be postponed?
Being on call and/or being postponed when you’ve been on call can be very frustrating. You and your family are stressed, tired, and you’re hungry.

Sometimes, even though you’ve been on call for a while, the surgery may be postponed until the next day.

We know that the wait can be very trying. We would like nothing better than for you not to have to wait. We will do everything we can to make sure that you and your family know when you’re going for surgery or if the surgery time is changing.

When can I eat or drink?
You’ll be NPO when you’re on call. This means that you can’t have anything to eat or drink before your surgery. If your surgery is postponed, an order will be left for you to have something to eat and drink. Please try to eat and drink if you’re allowed, as you will usually feel much better with something in your stomach.