



Preoperative Fasting Guidelines

Procedure Number

CHC-PA-0007

Version Nos:

1

Guidelines for patients with a normal gastric emptying rate having elective procedures under general anaesthesia, regional anaesthesia, local anaesthesia, or sedation

Perioperative fasting aims at reducing gastric content. Pulmonary aspiration of such content can cause significant morbidity and mortality, even in volumes less than 30 ml.

Clear fluids, i.e. water, fruit juices without pulp, clear tea and black coffee, are emptied from the stomach within 2 hours of ingestion.

Gastric emptying of **solids** is much less varied.

High fat content and meat require 8 hours or longer but a light meal, e.g. toast, less time.

Milk is considered a solid, because when mixed with gastric juice it thickens and congeals.

Ingested Material	Minimum fast for patients with normal gastric emptying having elective procedures
Clear fluids	2 hrs
Breast milk	4 hrs
Light meal, infant formula or other milk	6 hrs

Patients on AM list can have a light meal before midnight on the day before the procedure

Patients on PM list can have a light meal before 6 AM on the day of the procedure

Encourage **these patients** to drink clear fluids up to 2 hours before elective procedures, because not only will they feel much better, morbidity will decrease

Delayed gastric emptying is seen in patients with poorly controlled diabetes, renal failure, sepsis, trauma including head injury, pain, gastro-oesophageal reflux, gastro-intestinal obstruction, pregnancy and obesity. These patients should fast well before midnight the day before the procedure. Because these patients cannot ingest clear fluids, it is good practice to start a 12 hour IV infusion of 1000 ml 4% Glucose in 0.18% NaCl at 7 AM on day of procedure.

Revision History	Version:	1
	Developed By:	Dr Anders Johnson HOD Anaesthetics
	Authorised By:	Dr Anders Johnson HOD Anaesthetics
	Date Authorised:	January 2010
	Date Last Reviewed:	January 2010
	Date Of Next Review:	January 2012