

# Day Case Surgery

## Instructions and Information for Patients

## What is this Leaflet about?

This leaflet provides information about eating and drinking rules before a general anaesthetic. It also gives further information about what to take with you to the hospital.

Before a general anaesthetic you are asked to avoid eating and drinking for a certain amount of time. We sometimes call this “nil by mouth”. This leaflet is for adults only undergoing day case procedures and is based on the guidelines published by NICE (National Institute for Health and Care excellence).

Fasting requires not eating food including soups or sweets, chewing gums, drinking orange juice or taking large amounts of milk in your coffee or tea. You may be asked to drink clear fluids only.

### **Clear fluids are defined as follows**

Water, tea or coffee with a small splash of milk, squash or cordial

## Why is fasting important?

Fasting is important to avoid complications during your surgery and anaesthetic. This is because when the anaesthetic is used your body reflexes are temporarily stopped and there is a risk of vomiting and/or bringing up food into your throat and lungs which could potentially affect your breathing and damage the lungs.

This leaflet only gives you further information regarding fasting before an operation and more information will be given to you about eating and drinking after your procedure by the nurses looking after you.

## Fasting advice

- Admission: **You must not have anything to eat from 2am** on the day of your operation. However, you can **continue to drink clear fluids** up until **2 hours before** your admission to hospital. For example, if called into hospital at 7am, you can drink clear fluids until 5am; if called in at 12pm you can drink clear fluids till 10am
- Once in hospital, sips of water are allowed for your comfort before the operation
- Continue taking your medications as normal unless told otherwise in your pre-operative assessment

## Before your operation

- Please bring all your medications with you when you come in for your operation and let the team looking after you know whether you are taking any over the counter medications or herbal remedies
- Please follow the instructions given to you in how to manage your medications and which medications you can continue taking and which medications should be temporarily stopped
- Please take a bath or shower on the morning of your admission
- Please remove any nail varnish and if you have any acrylic nails remove the nail varnish from at least two fingers. The nails can remain in place. This is to help ensure the vital signs we are

recording are accurate as the machines monitoring your oxygen levels may be affected by the presence of nail varnish

- Please do not wear any contact lenses before the operation. If you want to remove them when you are in the hospital, please bring a container with you where they can be safely stored. If you have any you can wear your glasses
- Please remove all jewellery and avoid bringing any valuables with you. Plain wedding rings may be left on
- Please ensure you have a supply of over-the-counter painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen at home to use after your operation unless you are allergic to them or they are contraindicated. These can be purchased from a pharmacy or supermarket.

## Coming to the hospital

Please come to the ward on the time and date specified on your letter. You need to be on time so the nurses, surgeon and anaesthetist can see you before your operation. This will also be a good time to ask any questions if you have any and we will be happy to answer them.

The actual time of the operation depends on where you are in the operating list order and is decided by the medical and theatre team on the day. Please be aware that you might have to wait for your allotted time.

When you come to the hospital please bring a dressing gown and slippers as there is usually a small walk to the operating theatre. Loose

clothing is recommended for comfort and you can bring a book, magazine or electronic device to use before your operation.

You are welcome to bring one adult relative or friend but please avoid bringing children under 16 years of age.

**Please note it is essential that you have a responsible adult to accompany you home and care for you for the first 24 hours after the operation. If you do not have this support in place, your surgery may have to be cancelled for your safety.**

## Contact details

If you have any questions regarding your surgery or eating or drinking, please do not hesitate to contact one of the practitioners at the hospital.

If you have any queries about your surgery appointment please call us on 03300417475 by selecting option 5 or email:

[modality.ent@nhs.net](mailto:modality.ent@nhs.net)

## References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available and represents a summary of expert and professional opinions.