

# Eating and Drinking Before Surgery: Patient Instructions

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. Take your diabetes medications as advised.



**Suggested 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 sugar-free clear fluids until 3 hours before Surgery Time.

Sugar-free, clear fluids are water, black coffee or plain tea.

Do **not** add milk or cream to your coffee or tea.

**STOP** drinking 3 hours before your Surgery Time.

**EXCEPTION: HYPOglycemia or LOW Blood Sugar:** Continue to test your blood sugar (BG) as you normally do, or as instructed by your health care provider. Treat a BG below 4.0 mmol/L with Dextrose Tablets (4) or 2/3 cup clear sugar fluids (apple juice or regular soda pop) and re-test in 15 minutes. If BG remains below 4.0 mmol/L, repeat treatment. **Tell your health care provider about the low blood sugar.**



\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

Surgery Time minus \_\_\_\_ hours

## 3 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.



**EXCEPTION: HYPOglycemia or LOW Blood Sugar:** Continue to test your blood sugar (BG) as you normally do, or as instructed by your health care provider. Treat a BG below 4.0 mmol/L with Dextrose Tablets (4) or 2/3 cup clear sugar fluids (apple juice or regular soda pop) and re-test in 15 minutes. If BG remains below 4.0 mmol/L, repeat treatment. **Tell your health care provider about the low blood sugar.**

## What food should I avoid for my 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 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.**