

NPO Guidelines

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Holly Waller

These guidelines apply to patients scheduled for elective procedures requiring anesthesia of any type (including IV sedation or blocks). These guidelines do not apply to emergency cases.

- Patients must be strict NPO except medications with a sip of water for a minimum of 2 hours prior to the start of anesthesia
- Clear liquids may be consumed up to 2 hours prior to the start of anesthesia. Outpatients should be instructed that they may take clear liquids until 2 hours prior to the time they are to arrive in the facility (this is longer than 2 hours prior to anesthesia start, but is necessary to prevent delays if there is a change in the surgery schedule).
- **No solids or non-clear liquids** for a minimum of 7 hours prior to the start of anesthesia. **No distinction is made between different types of solids or non-clear liquids.** Outpatients should be instructed not to take any solids or non-clear liquids for at least 7 hours prior to the time they are to arrive in the facility.
- Tube feedings are treated as solids and must be off for a minimum of 7 hours prior to the start of anesthesia unless the patient is already intubated and will remain intubated throughout the perioperative period. Patients undergoing tracheostomy must have tube feedings off for a minimum of 7 hours prior to the start of anesthesia.

Type of oral intake	Minimum time prior to anesthesia start (or facility arrival for outpatients)
Clear liquids*	2 hours

Solids or non-clear liquids (including tube feedings)	7 hours
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*Clear liquids include water, coffee or tea *without cream or artificial creamer*, or other liquids that are transparent such as apple juice, 7-Up or Sprite. Note that adding cream to coffee or tea makes them non-clear liquids. These liquids should **not** include alcohol