

SURGERY

Food and Drink



GUIDELINES

What does “NPO” mean?

NPO is a term that means “**nothing by mouth.**” For a period of time before surgery, your child can have nothing to eat or drink. These guidelines are in place to keep your child safe.

Rules for The Children’s Hospital at OU Medical Center:

- Children cannot have food or milk products after midnight the night before surgery.
- Children can have clear liquids until 2 hours before **arrival** at the hospital.

What is a “clear liquid”?

A clear liquid is any drink that you can see through, such as Sprite, apple juice, water, or PediaLyte.

Chipper Gives

Special Instructions:

If your child drinks **breast milk**, he/she can drink breast milk until 4 hours before arriving at the hospital. If your child drinks **formula**, he/she can drink formula until 6 hours before arriving at the hospital.



Date of surgery: _____
Arrival time: _____
Food until: _____
Clear liquids until: _____

POP QUIZ

What answer choice could be considered “a clear liquid”?

- A** Sprite **D** Mints, gum, lollipops
B PediaSure **E** Jumex brand juice
C Orange juice w/pulp **F** Chicken broth

If you chose answer choice **A**, that’s correct! If any of the other items are consumed by your child, surgery time may be delayed or need to be rescheduled for your child’s safety.

My child ate only one bite of food and not the whole piece. Will surgery time still be delayed? Yes or No

The answer is **YES**. If your child eats one bite or an entire piece, the surgery case will be delayed the same length of time due to the amount of time the stomach needs to digest food.



QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

Q: What could happen if my child had something to eat or drink after the given time guideline?

A: It could cause serious health problems, such as aspiration. This means that once your child is completely asleep under anesthesia, food could leave the stomach and enter the airway, causing difficulty breathing. Further complications, such as pneumonia, may occur and your child may need additional treatment and time in the hospital.

Q: My child doesn’t understand why he can’t have breakfast. How do I tell him?

A: A simple, not detailed, response is most appropriate. “The sleepy medicine that you get for surgery can sometimes cause kids to feel sick to their stomach. The doctors don’t want you to get sick while you’re asleep. That’s why it’s safest to not have any food or drink. You can have something to drink as soon as you wake up.”

For further questions, please contact
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