Eating and Drinking Before Surgery

Follow these instructions or your surgery will be cancelled! This is for your safety, to prevent aspiration (food in your lungs). Aspiration is life-threatening.

**Eating**

Eat as you always do the day before surgery.

Your last food before surgery should be a low fat snack. **Don’t eat meats, eggs, fried foods, peanut butter, or nut butters.**

**Stop eating 8 hours before surgery!**

Eat Snack A OR Snack B—not both.

**Snack A:**
- 1 small piece of fruit
- and 1 cup cereal (corn flakes or Rice Krispies®)
- and ½ cup skim, 1%, or 2% milk

OR

**Snack B:**
- 1 small piece of fruit
- and ½ cup yogurt (2% fat or less)
- and 1 slice of toast with jam (no butter, no margarine, no peanut butter or nut butters)

**Drinking**

It’s important to drink enough fluids with carbohydrate (sugar) to prepare your body for surgery.

**The evening before surgery:**
- drink 3 cups of apple juice OR cranberry cocktail (not diet or low calorie)

**The morning of surgery:**
- drink 2 cups of apple juice OR cranberry cocktail (not diet or low calorie)

**Stop drinking 3 hours before surgery!**

Until 3 hours before surgery, you can also drink the clear fluids below:
- water
- black tea (no milk or cream)
- black coffee (no milk or cream)

**Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours before surgery.**

**If your surgeon told you to do a bowel preparation**
- Once you start the bowel preparation, you can only drink clear fluids (no food, snacks, or alcohol).
- Follow the directions in the *Drinking* section above.

Your hospital will call you or you’ll be asked to call the hospital the day before surgery to find out the time of your surgery: __________________________________________________________________________

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If you have diabetes or kidney problems (renal failure)

**Eating**
- Eat as you always do the day before surgery.
- Follow the guidelines under *Eating* on page 1.

**Drinking**

**Stop drinking 3 hours before surgery!**

*Until 3 hours before surgery,* you can drink the *sugar-free* clear fluids below:
- water
- black tea (no milk or cream)
- black coffee (no milk or cream)

**Don’t drink alcohol for 24 hours before surgery.**

Follow the daily fluid limit your healthcare provider gave you.

**You must stop drinking 3 hours before surgery!**

Time to stop drinking by: _____________________

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You must stop eating 8 hours before surgery!

Time to stop eating by: _____________________