

Sip Til Send – Information for patients

To keep you safe during your surgery, you must not eat any solid food for at least 6 hours before the operation. This also means no soup, no chewing gum and no sweets.

However, you are allowed to sip water or other “clear fluids” until you are sent to the operating theatre, so we call this ‘Sip Til Send’.

What can I drink?

- Water
- Black tea or black or black coffee (with no milk, but sugar is allowed)
- Diluted squash
- Juice without bits

How much can I sip?

- You can drink unlimited amounts of these fluids **until two hours** before surgery.
- From 2 hours before surgery until you are ‘Sent for’ by the operating theatre team, you may sip slowly, up to 170ml (an NHS cup) per hour.
- For children in the 2 hours before surgery: 3ml per kilogram body weight, up to 170ml per hour for children weighing 55kg or more.

Can I bring my own water bottle?

Yes. Make sure it has a lid that won't leak!

Why am I allowed to have these drinks?

- These drinks are allowed because they empty from the stomach faster than solid food or other thicker/cloudy/fizzy drinks.
- It helps to stop you getting thirsty or dehydrated.
- It means that you are more comfortable before and after surgery, and there is no increase in complications with having these drinks.

Can everybody have these drinks before their surgery?

Some patients can't ‘Sip Til Send’ because of particular medical or surgical reasons. Your doctor, nurse or practitioner will explain if this applies to you.

Questions?

If you have questions or need more information, please ask your nurse, doctor or practitioner.

Other resources:

- Please see: <https://cpoc.org.uk/patients>.
- Please see: <https://cpoc.org.uk/sip-til-send>
- There is more information about interventions to help people preparing for surgery at: <https://www.cpoc.org.uk/guidelines-and-resources/perioperative-optimisation-Top-seven-interventions>
- There is a helpful **Video** from Derby and Burton: <https://youtu.be/ZYc3LN2hILU>

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