

Sip Til Send – Information for patients

To keep you safe during your surgery or sedation, 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. Recent research shows the benefits of clear liquids right up to your procedure. This is usually better than being completely 'Nil By Mouth'. Now, you are allowed to sip water or other 'clear fluids' until the operating theatre team 'send for' you, so we call this 'Sip Til Send'.

What and when can I drink?

For 6 hours before surgery	No food. No chewing gum. No sweets. No fizzy drinks. No soup. (Babies may have breast milk until 3 hours before surgery.)
From 6 hours before surgery until 2 hours before surgery	You may drink unlimited clear fluids: water black tea or black coffee squash or juice without bits Some hospitals may give you carbohydrate drinks.
From 2 hours before surgery until the operating theatre team 'send for' the patient 'Sip Til Send'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may sip slowly on clear fluids: water black tea or black coffee squash or juice without bits Up to 170mls per hour (that's a standard NHS cup) until the operating team send for you For a child: up to 3ml per kilogram body weight per hour (up to 170ml per hour for 55kg+ child)

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 your procedure. There are no more 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.

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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