

Sip Til Send - A recommended protocol

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)
This applies to all patients unless a senior clinician has requested an "opt out" for an individual patient.	
This also applies to patients having sedation.	

Please see the '[Sip Til Send](#)' webpage. The above protocol is a pragmatic resource to enable any UK hospital to start Sip Til Send to benefit patients. We encourage NHS sites to add this as an appendix to fasting or sedation policies. Many hospitals and organisations will be happy to share their resources. @SipTilSend

Local variations:

- Some hospitals allow tea or coffee with up to 15ml of milk.
- If a patient has been chewing gum or eating sweets, the anaesthetist or sedation prescriber should decide to cancel or not, balancing risks.
- Some hospitals allow patients to bring water bottles to drink freely up till 2 hours before surgery, but bottles can contaminate water coolers, and it can be difficult to assess the amount drunk.

References:

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4. <https://associationofanaesthetists-publications.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/anr3.12271>
5. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2772609624000261>
6. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37982593/>
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8. **Video** from Derby and Burton: <https://youtu.be/ZYc3LN2hLU>
9. **Video** from Tayside: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlxgPRmtQLk>
10. Media release from Derby and Burton: <https://www.uhdb.nhs.uk/latest-news/new-fasting-guidance-allowing-adults-to-sip-water-before-surgery-or-procedure-launched-across-uhdb-16895/>
11. Information from South Tees: <https://www.southtees.nhs.uk/resources/sip-til-send/>
12. Information from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: <https://abuhb.nhs.wales/news/news/sip-til-send-new-fasting-guidance-allowing-patients-to-sip-water-before-surgery-or-procedure-launched/>
13. Information from Victoria, Australia: <https://www.safercare.vic.gov.au/best-practice-improvement/clinical-guidance/non-urgent-elective-surgery/sip-til-send-fluid-fasting>
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15. Information from Dublin <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/acute-hospitals-division/hospital-groups/dublin-midlands-hospital-group/news/sip-til-send-new-fasting-guidance-allowing-orthopaedic-patients-to-sip-water-before-surgery-launches-in-tullamore-hospital.html>
16. Policy from Leicester: <https://secure.library.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/PAGL/Shared%20Documents/Pre%20Operative%20Fasting%20for%20Adults%20and%20Children%20UHL%20Guideline.pdf>
17. Resources about DrEaMing from PQIP: <https://pqip.org.uk/pages/dreamwebnov22>

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