A close-up of a logo

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**‘SipTilSend’ –** 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 ‘SipTilSend’.

**What and when can I drink?**

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| For **6 hours**  before surgery | No food. No chewing gum. No sweets. No fizzy drinks. No soup.  (Infants 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  **‘SipTilSend’** | * 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 if 55k+). No fluids for 1 hour before anaesthesia. |
| This applies to all patients unless a senior clinician has requested an “opt out” for an individual patient or procedure (eg Transoesphageal Echocardiogram or Gastroscopy should have no fluid for 2 hours). | |

**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 ‘SipTilSend’ 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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