

Fasting Times for Patients Receiving Anesthesia and Procedural Sedation

This Policy is Applicable to the following sites:

Big Rapids (Mecosta County Medical Center), Gerber (Newaygo County General Hospital Association), Ludington (Memorial Medical Center of West Michigan), Outpatient/Physician Practices, Pennock (Pennock Hospital), Reed City (Reed City Hospital Corporation), SH GR Hospitals (Spectrum Health Hospitals), SHMG, United/Kelsey (Spectrum Health United; Spectrum Health Kelsey Hospital), Zeeland (Zeeland Community Hospital)

Applicability Limited to:	N/A
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Version #:	4
Effective Date:	10/14/2020
Functional Area:	Clinical Operations

Purpose: To outline the process for defining acceptable fasting times and patient fasting instructions. This policy applies to all patients receiving general anesthesia, monitored anesthesia care (MAC), or moderate sedation.

Rationale: The American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) practice guidelines are systematically developed recommendations that assist the practitioner and patient in making decisions about health care. The purposes of these guidelines are to:

1. Enhance the quality and efficiency of anesthesia care
2. Stimulate evaluation of clinical practices
3. Reduce the severity of complications related to perioperative pulmonary aspiration of gastric contents.

Enhancements to the guidelines may include but are not limited to the cost-effective use of perioperative preventive medication, increased patient satisfaction, avoidance of delays and cancellations, decreased risk of dehydration or hypoglycemia from prolonged fasting, and the minimization of perioperative morbidity. Spectrum Health Surgical Services has modified the Nil per os or NPO (a medical instruction meaning to withhold oral food and fluids from a patient for various reasons) times to include a buffer to allow sufficient NPO time in the event of schedule changes.

Responsibility: Registered Nurse (RN), Anesthesiologist/Designee, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), Sedationist

Policy Content

This policy supersedes all other physician orders for NPO; the only exception is for procedures involving the alimentary canal and/or patients who were bowel prepped. Any other deviance from these guidelines requires approval from the participating anesthesia provider.

General Considerations:

- I. For emergent/other surgeries where NPO status cannot be determined, patients will be assumed to have a full stomach. Additional techniques and interventions such as rapid

sequence intubation (RSI), modified RSI, gastric decompression, and/or pharmacologic therapies will be considered by the anesthesiologist.

- II. For non-emergent cases and for those patients who violate NPO instructions, a wait of eight (8) hours for full meal, six (6) hours for light meal (consisting of dry toast, crackers, or pretzels), and two (2) hours for clear liquids will be required.
- III. Providers may implement alternate NPO practices to protect the airway for special patient populations who would per clinical decision-making fall outside of these guidelines (such as certain acute or chronic diseases or medical therapies).
- IV. For all patients with **tube feedings**:
 - a. Basic NPO times apply to all feeding tubes (gastric, jejunal, & duodenal).
 - b. For patients who are NOT intubated, tube feedings must be held six (6) hours prior to the scheduled surgery time.
 - c. For airway protected patients (defined as cuffed device, intubated or tracheostomy with cuff), confirmed post-pyloric (jejunal or duodenal) tube feedings do NOT need to be stopped for non-airway related procedure.
 - d. For airway protected patients with gastric tube feedings undergoing non-airway related procedures, stop tube feeds two (2) hours prior to surgery.
 - e. Medications to be given via feeding tubes on the day of surgery may be given with clear liquids up to two (2) hours prior to procedure.
- V. Minimum fasting times for healthy adult patients (**AM Admits/Outpatients**) undergoing elective procedures. NPO times for outpatients and patients being admitted day of surgery are based on arrival times in the facility, rather than scheduled surgery times. Outpatients and patients being admitted day of surgery often arrive to the facility 60-120 minutes prior to scheduled surgery time.
 - a. **Adult patients will be instructed to follow these guidelines**
 - i. **Day prior** to procedure consume a normal diet unless instructed otherwise by the surgeon.
 - ii. **Day of procedure (solids):** May consume a light meal consisting of dry toast, crackers, or pretzels up to six (6) hours prior to arrival time. Consumption of other foods may lead to a delay or cancellation of procedure.
 - iii. **Day of procedure (clear liquids):** Consuming 16 ounces of clear liquids is encouraged up to two (2) hours prior to arrival time at the facility, not surgery time.
 - iv. **Medications** to be taken day of surgery may be taken with sips of clear liquids up to two (2) hours prior to procedure.
- VI. Minimum fasting times for healthy pediatric patients (**AM Admits/Outpatients up to 18 years of age**) undergoing elective procedures. NPO times for outpatients and patients being admitted day of surgery are based on arrival times in the facility, rather than scheduled surgery times. Outpatients and patients being admitted day of surgery often arrive to the facility 60-120 minutes prior to scheduled surgery time.
 - a. Parents/guardians/caregivers of pediatric patients will be instructed to follow these guidelines:
 - i. **Day prior** to procedure consume a normal diet unless instructed otherwise by the surgeon.

- ii. **Day of procedure (solids):** May consume a light meal consisting dry toast, crackers, or pretzels up to six (6) hours prior to arrival time. Consumption of other foods may lead to a delay or cancellation of procedure.
 - iii. **Day of procedure (infant feedings):**
 - 1. NPO for infant formula for at least six (6) hours prior to arrival time
 - 2. NPO for breast milk for four (4) hours prior to arrival time (recognizing arrival is frequently two (2) hours prior to procedure)
 - iv. **Day of procedure (clear liquids):** Clear liquids, preferably water, are encouraged up to two (2) hours prior to arrival time. Consumption of other liquids, (besides those listed in [Appendix A](#)) may lead to a delay or cancellation of procedure.
 - v. **Medications** to be taken day of surgery may be taken with sips of clear liquids up to two (2) hours prior to procedure.
- VII. Minimum fasting times for adult and pediatric **inpatients** undergoing elective procedures. For all inpatients NPO times are determined by surgical schedule time rather than arrival time.
- a. **Day prior** to procedure may consume a normal diet unless instructed otherwise by provider orders.
 - b. **Day of procedure (solids):** May consume a light meal consisting dry toast, crackers, or pretzels up to eight (8) hours prior to scheduled procedure time. Consumption of other foods may lead to a delay or cancellation of procedure.
 - c. **Day of procedure (clear liquids):** Clear liquids ([Appendix A](#)), preferably water, may be consumed up to four (4) hours prior to procedure time. Consumption of other liquids may lead to a delay or cancellation of procedure.
 - d. **Medications** to be taken day of surgery may be taken with sips of clear liquids up to two (2) hours prior to procedure.
 - e. **Day of procedure (infant feedings):**
 - i. NPO for infant formula for at least eight (8) hours prior to scheduled procedure time.
 - ii. NPO for breast milk for six (6) hours prior to scheduled procedure time.
 - iii. NPO for neonatal “sweeties” for two (2) hours prior to scheduled procedure time.

Spectrum Health reserves the right to alter, amend, modify or eliminate this policy/procedure at any time without prior notice and in compliance with *Administrative Policy: Policy and Procedure Structure, Standards and Management*.

Revisions

Spectrum Health reserves the right to alter, amend, modify or eliminate this policy at any time without prior written notice.

Policies Superseded and Replaced:

This policy supersedes and replaces the following policies as of the effective date of this policy CPOL-ANS-D0365-PERI.

References:

American Society of Anesthesiologists (2011). *Practice guidelines for preoperative fasting and the use of pharmacologic agents to reduce the risk of pulmonary aspiration: Application to healthy patients undergoing elective procedures*. Retrieved from <http://www.asahq.org/.../practice-guidelines-for-preoperative-fasting/en/1>

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Keywords

NPO, fasting, fasting times

Appendix A

Category Definitions of Liquids

Clear (see-through or transparent) liquids are defined to include:

Water

Coffee/tea- no cream

Pedialyte

Clear (see-through or transparent) flavored (no red) and unflavored gelatin

Clear (see-through or transparent) fruit juices (no red)

Clear Liquid Nutrition Supplements (such as Ensure Clear or Boost Breeze)

Sodas (e.g. cola, ginger ale, lemon lime)

Sports drinks (e.g. Gatorade, Propel) (no red)

Liquids to exclude:

Milk, cream, soy products, formula, and liquid supplements

Juices with pulp (e.g. orange, tomato)

Alcohol

Broths (contain fats and/or solids)

Red liquids

Breast Milk (see infant feeding recommendations above)