

COASTAL ANESTHESIOLOGY MEDICAL ASSOCIATES

Competent, Compassionate, Consistent and Comprehensive Anesthetic Care

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PREOPERATIVE FASTING GUIDELINES

Based on the American Society of Anesthesiologists Task Force on Preoperative Fasting

The purpose of this policy is to enhance the quality of efficiency of anesthesia care related to preoperative fasting. These enhancements include but are not limited to: increased patient satisfaction, avoidance of delays and cancellations, decreased risk of dehydration or hypoglycemia and minimization of the perioperative morbidity associated with pulmonary aspiration.

These guidelines are not intended as standards or absolute requirements. They may be adapted, modified or rejected according to clinical situations and/or anesthesia practitioner preferences. It should be noted, however, that deviation from these guidelines would require significant justification by the practitioner involved.

The intended patient population is limited to healthy patients of all ages undergoing elective procedures. They do not apply to patients undergoing procedures with straight local anesthesia without sedation, women in labor and patients with clinical risk factors for pulmonary aspiration such as obesity, diabetes, hiatal hernia, GERD, renal patients or those with a potentially difficult airway.

Summary of Fasting Recommendations to Reduce the Risk of Pulmonary Aspiration

Ingested Material	Minimum Fasting Period
Food*	8 hours
Infant formula, milk**, dry toast	6 hours
Breast milk	4 hours
Clear liquids***	2 hours

* Meals that include fried or fatty foods or meat may prolong gastric emptying time. Both the amount and type of foods ingested must be considered when determining an appropriate fasting period.

** Since milk is similar to solids in gastric emptying time, the amount ingested must be considered when determining an appropriate fasting period.

*** Clear liquids include water, fruit juices without pulp, carbonated beverages, clear tea and black coffee.

Because patients' reporting of foods and liquids ingested is often subjective and/or inaccurate and there because there is always the chance of scheduling changes CAMA's general fasting recommendation remains to withhold all food and drink after midnight the night prior to the procedure.

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