

Eating and Drinking Before Surgery and Diagnostic Tests

For your child's safety at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, his or her stomach must be empty before getting [anesthesia](#) at Cincinnati Children's.

It is very important that you follow these eating and drinking instructions carefully. If you do not, your child's procedure may be cancelled or delayed.

Related Services

[General and Thoracic Surgery](#)

[Family Resource Center](#)

[Spanish Translation](#)

For Children Less Than 12 Months Old

Time of Procedure	Eating and Drinking Instructions
Procedure done in the morning	After midnight the night before procedure: No meat, eggs, fried foods or fatty foods.
	Six (6) hours before procedure: • Stop all food and formula • May have clear liquids
	Four (4) hours before procedure: • Do not give anything more to drink • Stop clear liquids • Stop breastfeeding
	After midnight the night before procedure: No meat, eggs, fried foods or fatty foods.
	Six (6) hours before procedure: • Stop all food and formula

Procedure done in the afternoon

- May have clear liquids

Four (4) hours before procedure:

- Do not give anything more to drink
- Stop clear liquids
- Stop breastfeeding

IMPORTANT: Do not give your child meat, eggs, fried foods or fatty foods after midnight the night before the procedure.

For Children 12 Months of Age or Older

Time of Procedure	Eating and Drinking Instructions
Procedure done in the morning	After midnight the night before procedure: No meat, eggs, fried foods or fatty foods.
	Eight (8) hours before procedure:
	• Stop all food, milk products, juices that you cannot see through, candy, gum • You may give clear liquids
	Four (4) hours before procedure:
	• Do not give anything more to drink • Stop clear liquids • Supervise toothbrushing to be sure child does not drink.
	After midnight the night before procedure:

No meat, eggs, fried foods or fatty foods.

Eight (8) hours before procedure:

Procedure done in the afternoon

- May only have light breakfast of dry cereal, dry toast and a clear liquid
- Do not give any other solid food
- May drink only clear liquids

Four (4) hours before procedure:

- Do not give anything more to drink
- Stop clear liquids

What are Clear Liquids?

Clear liquids are fluids you can see through, like:

- Water or sugar water
- Breast milk
- Pedialyte®
- Jell-O®
- Kool Aid®
- Gatorade®
- Apple Juice
- Pulp-free juices
- Soft drinks
- Popsicles

Orange juice and cow's milk are **NOT** clear liquids.

Contact the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's

For more information or to request an appointment for the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, please [contact us](#).