



PACSA
PAEDIATRIC ANAESTHESIA COMMUNITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Consensus statement on clear fluids fasting for
elective pediatric general anesthesia**



Celebrating
10 years
in South Africa:

Significant cost savings
to state and private hospitals

Over 8 Million procedures
performed with SOJOURN
in South Africa to date

SA Reg. No. 4172.10098

Sevoflurane

SOJOURN 

Quality. Trust. Confidence.

SL SAFELINE
PHARMACEUTICALS

Tel. 011 288 5360 Email: info@safeline.co.za

For full prescribing information refer to the package insert approved by the
Medicines Regulatory Authority.
Safeline Pharmaceuticals (Pty) Ltd. 4845 Rugby Str, Weltevreden Park, 1709.
October 2018

PACSA endorsement of clear fluid fasting consensus statement

The Paediatric Anaesthesia Community of South Africa (PACSA) has considered the APA-ESPA-ADARPEF 'Consensus statement on clear fluids fasting for elective pediatric general anesthesia' and the associated special interest article: Thomas M, Morrison C, Newton R, Schindler E. Consensus statement on clear fluids fasting for elective pediatric general anesthesia. *Pediatr Anesth.* 2018;28:411–414.

PACSA endorses this consensus statement, agreeing that 'based on the current convincing evidence, unless there is a clear contra-indication, it is safe and recommended for all children able to take clear fluids, to be allowed and encouraged to have these fluids up to one hour before elective general anaesthesia'.



Larissa Cronjé

December 2018

On behalf of the PACSA Executive

The accompanying open-access article gives the following recommendations for good clinical practice:

- Pre-operative fasting for elective procedures in children 0-16y of age:

Solid food, formula milk	Breast milk	Clear fluids	Clear fluids
6 h	4h	1h	1 h

- Clear fluids are defined as 'water, clear (nonopaque) fruit juice or squash/cordial, ready diluted drinks, and non-fizzy sports drinks. Non-thickened, non-carbonated.'
- Contra-indications to be considered by the anaesthetist and surgical team include: Gastro-oesophageal reflux(GORD) (either on treatment or under investigation), renal failure, severe cerebral palsy, some enteropathies, oesophageal strictures, achalasia, diabetes mellitus with gastroparesis, and/or surgical contra-indications.

No specific recommendations are made by PACSA regarding volume, however practitioners are encouraged to read the accompanying article and to consider the information on banding volumes according to age. However, evidence for banding is limited and should not complicate or prevent the practical implementation of a one-hour clear fluid fast.

Acknowledgment

Thank you to Rebecca Gray, Annemie Malherbe and Phillipa Penfold for their work on the endorsement statement.



President	Dr L Cronje	Vice President	Dr A Bhattay
National Secretary	Dr D Nolte	National Treasurer	Dr H Meyer
Committee	Dr N Wessels	President (Past)	Dr C-A Lee

Consensus statement on clear fluids fasting for elective pediatric general anaesthesia

Mark Thomas¹, Christa Morrison¹, Richard Newton², Ehrenfried Schindler³

¹Department of Anaesthesia, Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, UK

²Department of Anaesthesia, Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton, UK

³Department of Paediatric Anaesthesia, Asklepios Klinik Sankt Augustin, Sankt Augustin, Germany

Corresponding author: Mark Thomas (mark.thomas@gosh.nhs.uk)

Pediatric anesthetic guidelines for the management of preoperative fasting of clear fluids are currently 2 hours. The traditional 2 hours clear fluid fasting time was recommended to decrease the risk of pulmonary aspiration and is not in keeping with current literature. It appears that a liberalized clear fluid fasting regime does not affect the incidence of pulmonary aspiration and in those who do aspirate, the sequelae are not usually severe or long-lasting. With a 2-hour clear fasting policy, the literature suggests that this translates into 6-7 hours actual duration of fasting with several studies up to 15 hours. Fasting for prolonged periods increases thirst and irritability and results in detrimental physiological and metabolic effects. With a 1-hour clear fluid policy, there is no increased risk of pulmonary aspiration and studies demonstrate the stomach is empty. There is less nausea and vomiting, thirst, hunger, and anxiety, if allowed a drink closer to surgery. Children appear more comfortable, better behaved and possibly more compliant. In children less than 36 months this has positive physiological and metabolic effects. It is practical to allow children to drink until 1 hour prior to anaesthesia on the day of surgery. In this joint consensus statement, the Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland, the European Society for Paediatric Anaesthesiology, and L'Association Des Anesthésistes-Réanimateurs Pédiatriques d'Expression Française agree that, based on the current convincing evidence base, unless there is a clear contraindication, it is safe and recommended for all children able to take clear fluids, to be allowed and encouraged to have them up to 1 hour before elective general anaesthesia.

First published in **Pediatric Anesthesia**. 2018;28:411–414. Republished with permission.

Background

Pediatric anesthetic guidelines for the management of preoperative fasting of clear fluids are currently 2 hours.¹ The traditional 2-hour clear fluid fasting time was recommended to decrease the risk of pulmonary aspiration and is not in keeping with current literature. It is based on historical adult literature^{2,3} that may not be applicable to the pediatric population. Mendelson's landmark paper showed a mortality effect in the obstetric population if they aspirated solid material, but there were no long-term sequelae in those who aspirated clear fluid.

Pulmonary aspiration is a rare event in children, with an incidence of 0.07%-0.1%.⁴⁻⁸ The recent APRICOT⁹ study found an incidence of 9.3/10 000 = 0.093%. The latter of course, included emergency and unfasted patients as well as elective children.

It appears that a liberalized clear fluid fasting regime does not affect the incidence of pulmonary aspiration,^{10,11} and in those who do aspirate, the sequelae are not usually severe or long-lasting.^{4,7} Aspiration was cited as being responsible for 2% of cardiac arrests in the POCA II registry which of course included emergency and unfasted patients.¹²

With a 2-hour clear fluids fasting policy, the literature suggests that this translates into 6-7 hours actual duration of fasting¹¹⁻¹⁷ with several studies up to 15 hours.^{18,19} Fasting for prolonged periods increases thirst and irritability²⁰ and results in detrimental physiological and metabolic effects.^{13,21}

The aim of publishing this statement was to provide current evidence on perioperative fasting of clear fluids for elective surgery, minimize side effects of fasting while balancing against the risk of aspiration of gastric contents in the perioperative period and to provide a consensus statement on clear fluids fasting guidelines (Figure 1).

For these guidelines, the clear fluids are defined as water, clear (nonopaque) fruit juice or squash/cordial, ready diluted drinks, and nonfizzy sports drinks. Non-thickened, non-carbonated. The recommended maximum volume of clear fluids is 3 mL/kg.

Recommendations for good clinical practice

- Clear fluid fasting times for elective general anaesthesia and sedation can be reduced to 1 hour, unless clinically contraindicated

'We the undersigned representatives of our respective national societies agree that, based on the current convincing evidence base, unless there is a clear contra-indication, it is safe and recommended for all children able to take clear fluids*, to be allowed and encouraged to have them up to **one hour** before elective general anaesthesia'



Charles Stack, President, Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland




Francis Veyckemans, President, European Society of Pediatric Anesthetists



Anne Laffargue, Présidente, L'Association Des Anesthésistes-Réanimateurs Pédiatriques d'Expression Française




Figure 1 Signatures supporting consensus statement

Table I. Preoperative fasting for elective procedures in children

Age (y)	Solid food, Formula milk	Breast milk	Clear fluids
0-16	6 h	4 h	1 h

- Contraindications that should be decided on by the anaesthetist and/or the surgical team but include: Gastro-oesophageal reflux

(GORD) (either on treatment or under investigation), renal failure, severe cerebral palsy, some enteropathies, oesophageal strictures, achalasia, diabetes mellitus with gastroparesis, and/or surgical contra-indications.

What is the supportive evidence for this recommendation?

A literature search of electronic databases PubMed, Medline, and Embase (publication dates up to October 14, 2017) was performed using the following MeSH terms: preoperative fasting in child, early intake oral carbohydrates, gastric emptying. Additionally, previous guidelines were used (AAGBI, ESA). From the references retrieved (PubMed 1507, Medline 100, Embase 584), the most recent and important articles were used.

Water empties from the stomach within 30 minutes²² and other clear fluids are almost gone within an hour.²³ Studies demonstrate there is no difference in gastric volume or pH if

children are starved 1 or 2 hours of clear fluids.²⁴ If the clear fluids contain glucose, gastric emptying can be significantly quicker.²⁵ A meta-analysis of 1457 patients demonstrates that age was not a determinant of gastric emptying²⁶.

Adverse outcomes may not be related to fasting status.²⁷ Liberalizing clear fluid intake has been demonstrated to have a similar risk of pulmonary aspiration¹⁰ with no increase in morbidity or mortality and may not be related to fasting status.⁹ In the most recent multi-centre pan-European study, APRICOT, no episodes of admission to intensive care was registered due to aspiration.⁹

Several studies have shown less nausea and vomiting, thirst, hunger, and anxiety, if allowed a drink closer to surgery. Children appear more comfortable, better behaved, and possibly more compliant.²⁸⁻³⁰ It has also been demonstrated that allowing a drink closer to surgery in children less than 36 months has positive physiological and metabolic effects.¹³

Why 1 hour?

The evidence suggests that clear fluids are cleared to a gastric volume of 1 mL/kg after 1 hour.²³ In institutions with a very liberal clear fluid fasting policy¹⁰ where children are allowed to drink until they come to theatre, the average fasting time was greater than 1 hour with no increased risk of aspiration. In this specific study, it was noted that no one was anesthetized within 30 minutes of a clear fluid drink. At another large institution, the clear fluid times were reduced to 1 hour in order to avoid the logistics and uncertainty that parents may face at home.¹¹ This appeared a practical way to reduce fasting times and again did not increase the risk of aspiration.

How much clear fluid should we allow children to drink?

We would suggest that 3 mL/kg or smaller would be a good starting point. Through serial magnetic resonance imaging of gastric volume 3 mL/kg of sugared fluid, residual gastric volume was back to baseline values 1 hour after ingestion.²³ Small amounts of clear fluid can and should be offered to the child up to 1 hour prior to the induction of general anesthesia while awaiting surgery²¹. One practical way is to offer 3 mL/kg of clear fluid to a child before being weighed by banding children according to their predicted weight.¹¹ This would mean 1- to 5-year olds are allowed up to 55 mL, 6-12 years up to 140 mL, and greater than 12 years up to 250 mL. Such banding avoids the need to wait for a current weight (if it is unknown) that could delay the offer of an appropriate volume.

Summary

The main benefits of updating current guidelines are:

- To avoid unnecessary prolonged clear fasting with the current 2-hour guidelines and the side effects of this.
- To maintain a low incidence of pulmonary aspiration by maintaining high standards of anesthesia and avoiding reduced fasting in those children deemed high risk.

Ethical approval

No ethics approval was necessary.

Disclosures

Dr Ehrenfried Schindler was past president for the European Society of Pediatric Anesthesia. Dr Mark Thomas is a section editor for Pediatric Anesthesia. The consensus statement has been endorsed by the Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland, European Society for Paediatric Anaesthesiology, and L'Association Des Anesthésistes-Réanimateurs Pédiatriques d'Expression Française (Figure 1).

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the council of the APAGBI and the ExBo of ESPA for considered feedback and discussion.

References

1. American Society of Anesthesiologists Committee on Standards and Practice Parameters. 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. *Anesthesiology*. 2011; 114: 495-511.
2. Mendelson C. The aspiration of stomach contents into the lungs during obstetric anaesthesia. *Am J Obstet Gynecol*. 1946;52:191-205.
3. Roberts R, Shirley M. Reducing the risk of acid aspiration during cesarean section. *Anesth Analg*. 1974;53:859-68.
4. Kelly C, Walker R. Perioperative pulmonary aspiration is infrequent and low risk in pediatric anesthetic practice. *Pediatr Anesth*. 2015;25:36-43.
5. Tan Z, Lee S. Pulmonary aspiration under GA: a 13-year audit in a tertiary pediatric unit. *Pediatr Anesth*. 2016;26:547-552.
6. Walker R. Pulmonary aspiration in pediatric anesthetic practice in the UK: a prospective survey of specialist centers over a one-year period. *Pediatr Anesth*. 2013;23:702-711.
7. Warner M, Warner M, Warner D, Warner L, Warner E. Perioperative pulmonary aspiration in infants and children. *Anesthes*. 1999;90:66-71.
8. Borland L, Sereika S, Woelfel S, et al. Pulmonary aspiration in pediatric patients during general anaesthesia: incidence and outcome. *J Clin Anesth*. 1998;10:95-102.
9. Habre W, Disma N, Virag K, et al. Incidence of severe critical events in paediatric anaesthesia (APRICOT): a prospective multicentre observational study in 261 hospitals in Europe. *Lancet*. 2017;5:412-425.
10. Andersson H, Zaren B, Frykholm P. Low incidence of pulmonary aspiration in children allowed intake of clear fluids until called to the operating suite. *Pediatr Anesth*. 2015;25:770-777.
11. Newton R, Stuart G, Willdridge D, Thomas M. Using quality improvement methods to reduce clear fluid fasting times in children on the preoperative ward. *Pediatr Anesth*. 2017;27:793-800.
12. Bhanaker S, Ramamoorthy C, Geiduschek JM, et al. Anaesthesia-related cardiac arrest in children: update from Pediatric Perioperative Cardiac Arrest Registry. *Anesth Analg*. 2007; 105: 344-350.
13. Denhardt N, Beck C, Huber D, et al. Optimized preoperative fasting times decrease ketone body concentration and stabilize mean arterial blood pressure during induction of anaesthesia in children younger than 36 months: a prospective observational cohort study. *Pediatr Anesth*. 2016;26:838-843.
14. Adenekan A. Perioperative blood glucose in a paediatric daycase facility: effects of fasting and maintenance fluid. *Afr J Paediatr Surg*. 2014;11:317-322.
15. Brunet-Wood K, Simons M, Evasiuk A, et al. Surgical fasting guidelines in children: are we putting them into practice? *J Pediatr Surg*. 2016;51:1298-1302.
16. Williams C, Johnson P, Guzzetta C, et al. Pediatric fasting times before surgical radiologic procedures: benchmarking institutional practices against national standards. *J Pediatr Nurs*. 2014;29:258-267.
17. Engelhardt T, Wilson G, Horne L, Weiss M, Schmitz A. Are you hungry? Are you thirsty? - fasting times in elective outpatient pediatric patients. *Pediatr Anesth*. 2011;21:964-968.
18. Buller Y, Sims C. Prolonged fasting of children before anaesthesia is common in private practice. *Anaesth Intensive Care*. 2016;44:107-110.
19. Agegnehu W, Rukewe A, Bekele N, Stoffel M, Nicoh M, Zeberga J. Preoperative fasting times in elective surgical patients at a referral hospital in Botswana. *Pan Afr Med J*. 2016;23:102.

20. Brady M, Kinn S, Ness V, O'Rourke K, Randhawa N, Stuart P. Preoperative fasting for preventing perioperative complications in children. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev.* 2009;(7):CD005285.
21. Frykholm P, Schindler E, Sumpelmann R. Pre-operative fasting in children. A review of the existing guidelines and recent developments. *BJA.* 2017;1-6.
22. Okabe T, Terashima H, Sakamoto A. Determinants of liquid gastric emptying: comparisons between milk and isocalorically adjusted clear fluids. *Br J Anaesth.* 2015;114:77-82.
23. Schmitz A, Kellenberger C, Liamlahi R, Studhalter M, Weiss M. Gastric emptying after overnight fasting and clear fluid: a prospective investigation using serial magnetic resonance imaging in health children. *Br J Anaesth.* 2012;108:644-647.
24. Schmidt A, Buehler P, Seglias L, et al. Gastric pH and residual volume after 1 and 2 h fasting time for clear fluids in children. *Br J Anaesth.* 2015;114:477-482.
25. Malmud LS, Fisher RS, Knight LC, Knight LC, Rock E. Scintigraphic evaluation of gastric emptying. *Semin Nucl Med.* 1982;12: 116-125.
26. Bonner JJ, Vajjah P, Abduljalil K, et al. Does age affect gastric emptying time? A model-based meta-analysis of data from premature neonates through to adults. *Biopharm Drug Dispos.* 2015;36:245-57.
27. Beach ML, Cohen DM, Gallagher SM, Cravero JP. Major adverse events and relationship to nil per os status in pediatric sedation/ anesthesia outside the operating room: a report of the pediatric sedation research consortium. *Anesthesiology.* 2016;124:80-8.
28. Schreiner MS, Triebwasser A, Keon TP. Ingestion of liquids compared with preoperative fasting in pediatric outpatients. *Anesthesiology.* 1990;72:593-597.
29. Castillo-Zamora C, Castillo-Peralta LA, Nava-Ocampo AA. Randomised trial comparing overnight preoperative fasting Vs oral administration of apple juice at 06:00-06:30 am in pediatric orthopaedic surgical patients. *Pediatr Anesth.* 2005;15:638-642.
30. Splinter W, Steward J, Muir J. The effect of preoperative apple juice on gastric contents, thirst and hunger in children. *Can J Anaesth.* 1989;36:55-58.

Apnoea of the Premature



A step forward

*Now available on
State Tender*

Cayona™

caffeine citrate

A STEP FORWARD

The most widely available caffeine citrate formulation
specifically designed for the treatment of **Apnoea of the Premature**



- The efficacy of caffeine citrate
- The confidence and convenience of a Pharmaceutical Standard formulation
- The same ampoule for IV & oral use

NSN: 181938221
MOQ: 1 pack of 10 ampoules

Chiesi
In neonatology for life

SAFELINE
PHARMACEUTICALS
Quality. Trust. Confidence.

For full prescribing information refer to the package insert approved by the medicines regulatory authority
References available on file at Safeline Pharmaceuticals