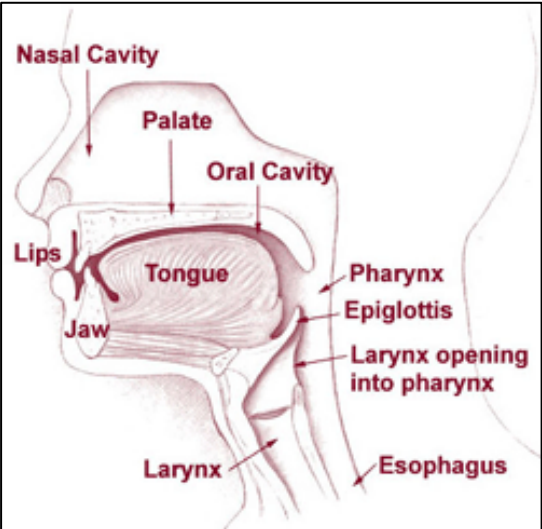


NPO / Fasting Guidelines

Anesthetic Pearls: Anesthetic Implications and Management of ASA Fasting Guidelines

There is still debate about the optimum and minimum fasting period. Since prolonged fasting does not guarantee an empty stomach at the time of induction, several investigators have questioned the validity of the traditional 8-12 hour fast prior to elective surgery. More recent studies have suggested that the ingestion of clear liquids up to 2 hours prior to induction of anesthesia has no significant effect on residual gastric volume or pH in adults. Similarly, pre-op ingestion of apple juice (3 ml/kg) has seen no adverse effect on gastric contents in children. Conversely, the decreased thirst and hunger may lead to less anxiety. Unlike clear liquids, solids have unpredictable gastric emptying times. And as such, solids require a greater fasting period than clear liquids. The emptying time of breast milk is extremely variable and many experts consider it as a solid. The following table represents the current American Society of Anesthesia NPO / fasting guidelines for elective procedures.



Ingested Material	Minimum Fast
Clear Liquids	2 hrs
Breast Milk	4 hrs
Infant Formula	6 hrs
Non-Human Milk	6 hrs
Light Meal / Solid	8 hrs

The above ASA fasting guidelines are currently being considered for thoughtful revision due to more recent recommendations and studies in the pediatric literature.

