

Nutrition and Hydration Instructions for Spine Patients

AT LEAST 7-10 DAYS BEFORE SURGERY

Proper nutrition and hydration can help your body prepare for and recover from surgery.

- Prepare healthy and balanced meals that include foods from all food groups: protein, whole grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy or non-dairy alternative to help optimize your recovery.
- Include high quality protein such as poultry, lean meat, fish, eggs, meat alternatives, beans, legumes, low fat yogurt and cheese, and nuts/seeds to your meals and snacks to help the body prepare and heal before surgery. Be sure you meet your daily needs (about 6-12 ounces per day) depending on individual needs.
- Consume adequate fiber from whole grains, fruits, vegetables, beans, legumes, and nut/seeds to help promote a healthy digestive tract.
- Consume an adequate intake of water and non-alcoholic fluids. Drink at least 8 cups of fluid per day. Hydration promotes healing.
- Avoid crash dieting before and after your surgery to ensure adequate intake of nutrients and energy for recovery. If weight loss is recommended, no more than 1-2 pounds per week is suggested.
- For more nutrition information, refer to the Spine Surgery Guide.

THE NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY:

Drink one of the items below 8-10 hours before your surgery **unless instructed not to by your surgeon**:

- 16fl oz (2 cups) Gatorade

OR

- 2 bottles of Ensure Pre-Surgery Carbohydrate Clear Nutrition Drink
- DO NOT eat any solid food after midnight unless instructed by your surgeon

Why should I drink extra carbohydrates before surgery?

Patients have better results when they hydrate and drink extra carbohydrates (carbs) before surgery. Carb loading helps your body handle the stress of surgery.

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How does carb loading improve my outcomes?

- You will likely be more comfortable both before and after surgery.
- You will likely feel less thirsty, less hungry, and less anxious.
- You will likely have better blood sugar control after surgery.
- You may have a shorter hospital stay and a rapid recovery

THE DAY OF SURGERY:

- **You may drink clear liquids up to 3 hours before your scheduled surgery time.**
- Limit the clear liquid volume to 1½ cups or 12 ounces per hour.

What can I drink and NOT drink the day of surgery?

Please follow instructions carefully or your surgery may be canceled.

Allowed	DO NOT CONSUME
Water	Milk or Dairy Products
Apple & Cranberry Juice	Citrus Juices
Gatorade or equivalent carb containing sports drinks	Prune Juice
Ensure® Pre-Surgery Carbohydrate Clear Nutrition Drink	Juices with Pulp
Plain Coffee or Tea. No milk or creamer.	Alcoholic Beverages

DO NOT consume liquids on the day of surgery if you have:

- History of esophageal surgery
- History of Hiatal Hernia
- GERD
- Gastrointestinal dysmotility or obstruction
- Diabetes mellitus
- History of difficult intubation
- Chronic opioid use
- Neurologic disease other than your spinal condition
- BMI > 35



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NUTRITION AND HYDRATION TO-DO CHECKLIST BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

7 Days Before Your Surgery

- Focus on Healthy Eating and Hydration
- Purchase the recommended carbohydrate (carb) containing clear liquid beverages if recommended by your surgeon
- Drink at least 64fl oz (~8 cups) of fluid per day.

1 Day Before Your Surgery

- Do NOT eat any solid food after midnight unless otherwise instructed by your surgeon
- Drink the recommended carbohydrate (carb) containing clear liquid beverages the night before your surgery if recommended by your surgeon

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