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Background	Fasting before anaesthesia was introduced decades ago because it was thought to reduce the risk and sequelae of pulmonary aspiration of gastric contents while under anaesthesia. There is no evidence that fasting reduces this risk. The reality is that patients fast for fluids for much longer than this. Prolonged fasting causes patient distress, discomfort, thirst, and potentiates post-operative nausea and vomiting (PONV). Many centres in the UK have moved to a more liberal fasting policy, which has reduced fluid fasting times, patients stress and PONV and thirst. There have been no recorded increases in aspiration or other complications.
The problem	Current NHS Tayside fasting policy is patients can drink clear fluids up until 2 hours prior to anaesthesia for surgery.
The solution	A move to a default 'Sip-Til-Send' policy will greatly simplify pre-operative preparation for theatre and will significantly reduce the discomfort of fluid fasting for patients. Patients will also be offered a hot drink (with milk if desired) on arrival in the ward or on the morning of their surgery.
The outcome	NOTE: Individual anaesthetists can individualise fasting instructions for specific patients if they feel it is clinically appropriate. Bespoke instructions will be given to ward staff and patients in this event.

Author	Watch this space! #SipTilSend Safe, Simple and Kind