



You can eat until 8 hours before your procedure.



You can drink water or clear fluids until 3 hours before your procedure.

It is important you stay hydrated. We recommend you have water just before your 3 hour cut off time.

Please **do not** eat or drink after these advised times. This could put you at risk and could lead to your procedure being cancelled.



You can breastfeed your baby in our Same Day Surgery Department before surgery.

Privacy can be provided in our individual patient bays and by drawing the curtains.



If you think you will miss a feed, then you might choose to express some milk before your procedure and leave a bottle for your baby.



Following your anesthetic you do not need to 'pump & dump'

This refers to expressing milk after an anaesthetic and throwing it out. This is **not necessary** because the anesthetic drugs are transferred into the milk at very low levels and rapidly disappear after your anesthetic.



### Antibiotics

For some procedures, it is necessary to be given antibiotics to prevent infection. Antibiotics are transferred into breast milk in small amounts and should not cause serious problems to your baby. Sometimes they can cause diarrhea or thrush (a yeast infection in your baby's mouth). Thrush can easily be treated by your Family Doctor.

# Breastfeeding

## AFTER AN ANAESTHETIC

### Questions?

Speak with your anaesthetist, or call the Pre-Surgical Assessment Clinic at: (613) 969-7400 ext. 2827

QHC Form #808



We hope this pamphlet answers your questions about breastfeeding if you need a surgical procedure. Please make sure your Anaesthetist and PreSurgical Nurse know that you are breastfeeding so this is taken into account during the planning and performing of your procedure.

### Do I have to stop breastfeeding if I need an anaesthetic?

No, there are many safe ways to manage breastfeeding around having a surgical procedure.

Nearly all drugs used during anaesthesia and sedation will pass into breast milk but in very small amounts that do not affect your baby. **In general, mothers with healthy newborns or older infants can start breastfeeding as soon as they are awake, stable and alert.** This is because anaesthetic agents rapidly disappear from the mother's bloodstream and breast milk after the anaesthetic is finished.

---

If your baby is premature, ill, or has difficulty breathing they may be more affected by the anaesthetic medications. Please speak with your anaesthetist before your procedure so they are able to make a plan of care.

### Sedation

This is when drugs are given to relax you during a procedure. You may receive sedation during minor procedures like a colonoscopy or dental work. Sedation can range from a small amount of drug given to reduce anxiety (light sedation), to being very sleepy and not remembering some of details of the procedure (deep sedation).

**It is safe to breastfeed as soon as you feel awake enough to safely hold your baby.**

### General anaesthesia

This is when you are asleep for the entire surgery and do not have any awareness of your procedure. If you have a general anaesthetic, your surgeon will usually give you some local anaesthetic while you are asleep to decrease your post-procedure pain.

**Following a general anaesthetic, it will take longer for you to become alert, but as soon as you are awake enough to hold your baby safely, it is safe to breastfeed.**

### Medications after surgery

#### Acetaminophen (Tylenol)

This is a very safe and effective pain medication. The amount a baby would receive from their mother's milk is much lower than the safe dose a baby can be given. If your baby needs acetaminophen while you are taking it, it is still safe to give it to your baby.

#### Ibuprofen (Advil)

This is a very good choice for breastfeeding women to help with pain control. It transfers to breast milk at very low levels and does not cause drowsiness. It can help to minimize the dose of other, more sedating medications used to control pain.

#### Opioids

These are strong painkillers which may be required after surgery. In general, these medications are transferred in low levels to breast milk so breastfeeding can continue. However, these drugs can be associated with drowsiness, especially if your baby is newborn, premature, or if these medications are used repeatedly at higher doses. Drugs containing **codeine** should **not** be taken while breastfeeding.

---

**It is safe to take acetaminophen and ibuprofen together to manage pain. We recommend taking these drugs regularly following your procedure to decrease the amount of opioid medication you need.**