



Hip Fracture: Eating and drinking

'Nil by mouth'

The hospital team may tell the person you care for not to eat or drink – to be *'nil by mouth'* during the hours immediately before their operation. This makes it safer when they receive an anaesthetic, but there is no need for them to go without food or drink before this time. Once they have had their operation, it is important that they eat and drink well as this will help them make a good recovery.

How you can help

In hospital

- Let staff know if your loved one normally finds eating and drinking difficult or if they're unable to move around in bed and get into a comfortable sitting position at mealtimes. Staff will be happy to help and some wards encourage carers to help at mealtimes as well. Offer to be on hand to help at mealtimes.
- Actively encourage the person you care for to eat and drink regularly.
- Ensure that drinks and any additional energy supplements are within their reach.
- Bring nutritious snacks to boost their calorific intake such as milk-based drinks and dried fruit and nuts.

- Encourage them to be sitting out of bed for meals if they can.

At home

- Make sure their fridge, freezer and cupboard are stocked with quick and easy meals and snack options.
- Talk to the occupational therapist about any aids and equipment that could help with independent eating and drinking at home.