

Perioperative Management of GLP-1 Receptor Agonists

Background Information:

- GLP-1 receptor agonist (GLP1RA) medications delay gastric emptying, predisposing patients to residual gastric contents and an aspiration event following a traditional eight hour fast from solids and liquids pre-operatively.
- Discontinuing GLP1RA medications prior to surgery requires a prolonged time frame to reduce the risk of delayed gastric emptying (for example, five half-lives for semaglutide is five weeks) and would also require a titrated return to therapy following surgery.
- GLP1RA medications are important for maintaining normal blood glucose levels on the day of surgery.

Recommendation:

- **Continue all GLP1RA medications pre-operatively; DO NOT STOP.**
- All other medications for management of diabetes mellitus should be managed as previously outlined and patients should continue monitoring their blood glucose levels routinely.
- All patients on GLP1RA medications (including up to two months prior to surgery) should follow an alternative fasting protocol:
 - NO solids for 24 hours
 - **Clear fluid diet only** for the day before surgery
 - Nothing by mouth (NPO) for 6 hours prior to surgery

References:

1. S. L. Hocking, D. A. Scott, M. L. Remedios et al. 2025 ADS/ANZCA/GESA/NACOS clinical practice recommendations on the peri-procedural use of GLP-1-GIP receptor agonists. *Anaesthesia and Intensive Care* 2025; 53(5) 300-306
2. A. D. Oprea, L. J. Ostapenko, B. Sweitzer et al. Perioperative management of patients taking glucagon-like peptide 1 receptor agonists: Society for Perioperative Assessment and Quality Improvement (SPAQI) multidisciplinary consensus statement. *British Journal of Anaesthesia* 2025; 135 (1): 48-78
3. K. El-Boghdady, J. Dhesi, P. Fabb et al. Elective peri-operative management of adults taking glucagon-like peptide 1 receptor agonists, glucose-dependent insulintropic peptide agonists and sodium-glucose cotransporter-2 inhibitors: a multidisciplinary consensus statement. *Anaesthesia* 2025; 80: 412-424

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