

This practice of not giving fluids orally to a person in surgery came about during the 1940's when anesthesia was administered through a mask. So it made sense then, but today, intubation is used, placing a tube down the throat, so no food or liquids makes no difference. Only 2.6 persons die from asphyxiation out of a million and mainly because the person giving the anesthesia was incompetent.

This practice has denied laboring woman food and drink during birth. Midwives never deny a woman food and drink. People believe incorrectly that IVs are harmless, so they accept this old standard practice. Dehydration and starvation negatively affect both your laboring partner and the baby, both of which need plenty of energy and liquids. Any of us who are athletes understand that at strenuous stamina-demanding events one needs to eat carbohydrates before the activity and get fluids during the event to perform effectively – the same is true of a birthing woman. We tell guys that labor is like lifting two dumbbells of 25 pounds each for one minute with a two-minute break between reps. The catch is that you have to do that for 12 hours without eating, though you may have ice chips. No one we know of will try that, but you get the point. None of us would starve ourselves during an athletic competition of endurance.