

Anesthesiology at Doctors Hospital

How safe is anesthesia today?

Tremendous advances have been made over the last 20 years in the field of anesthesiology. Modern anesthetic drugs are safer, shorter acting and have fewer side effects than those used in the past. These advances have helped make same-day surgery possible. Sophisticated, reliable monitoring and alarm systems, as well as more highly qualified and trained anesthesiologists, have further reduced the already low risk of anesthesia. Of course, as with many of our daily activities there is always some risk involved. However, objectively and statistically, modern anesthesia is extremely safe. The procedure helps to relieve pain during surgery.

What are the risks associated with anesthesia?

All operations and all anesthetics have some risks that are dependent upon many factors including the type of surgery, and the medical condition of the patient. Fortunately, adverse events are very rare. The specific risks of anesthesia vary with the particular procedure and the condition of the patient.

The probability of the above risks is low, although serious injury can result. Because general anesthesia affects all areas of the body, such as the heart and lungs, side effects are more common than with local or regional anesthetics. Local and regional anesthetics are considered safer than general anesthesia. However, most side effects from general anesthesia do not last long and are easily relieved by the anesthesiologist or nurse anesthetist who stays with you throughout the operation. Discuss with your doctor any concerns you may have.

When should I call the doctor?

If you feel anything unusual while you are recovering from the procedure, tell the doctor or nurse immediately.

Call the doctor during office hours if:

- You have questions about the procedure or its results
- You want to make another appointment

Should I take my usual medicines?

Some medications should be taken and others should not. It is important to discuss this with your anesthesiologists. Do not interrupt medications unless your anesthesiologist or surgeon recommends it.

Can I choose my anesthesiologist?

We encourage you to discuss, in advance, any questions or concerns you may have with your surgeon or directly with your anesthesiologist of choice. You can request a specific anesthesiologist for your surgery, but this is best done well in advance through your surgeon's office. We will do our best to honor your request.

Will my hospital bill include my Anesthesiologist's fees?

Anesthesia services at Doctors Hospital is a separate entity from the hospital, and as such, services will be billed separately. Your hospital bill may not include professional fees for services by your Anesthesiologist. Please feel free to call our Customer Service Department with any questions you may have regarding your insurance coverage for anesthesia services.

For pain management:

In addition to your pain being relieved or blocked entirely during a surgical procedure, it is equally important to provide adequate pain relief postoperatively for your comfort and well-being. After surgery, the anesthesiologist is involved in prescribing pain-relieving medication and techniques that are best for each individual patient to maintain a level of comfort and to follow proper rest. Because of their specialty training, anesthesiologists are uniquely qualified to prescribe and administer drug therapies for acute, chronic, cancer and childbirth pain. In childbirth, the anesthesiologist manages the care of two people, providing pain relief with epidural or spinal blocks for the mother while managing the life functions of both the mother and the baby.

Patient Directions

An empty stomach is extremely important for the safe administration of anesthesia. Therefore, all adult patients must refrain from eating or drinking anything at all for at least 8 hours before the start of anesthesia for elective surgery. However, since there may be last minute changes in the time of your scheduled surgery, abstain from eating or drinking after midnight the night before your surgery.



For More Information call:

Anesthesia 302-4733



Anesthesiology
At Doctors Hospital



DOCTORS HOSPITAL

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DOCTORS HOSPITAL

Health For Life

We would like to thank you for trusting Doctors Hospital with your health care needs. As you are about to undergo surgery, we would like you to have all the information you require to be knowledgeable and reassured regarding your procedures. Your doctors will instruct you very thoroughly, but please also take time to read carefully the portions of this guide that pertain to you.

As an informed patient, you can better understand what modern anesthesia is, so that you may help make well-informed decisions about your care. As physician specialists, our main goal is to provide you with the best medical care possible during your surgery as well as safe, comfortable relief from pain.

We hope you will read this brochure so that you can work with your anesthesiologist to make the most appropriate decisions about your anesthesia. We anticipate that this information will answer many of your questions, but it cannot answer them all. When you talk with your anesthesiologist, please ask about any questions or concerns you have.

We believe that the best anesthesia care for you will result from you being a cooperative, confident and well-informed patient, while we, as physicians, are likewise well-informed in addition to being vigilant and caring.

What is an Anesthesiologist?

Most people think of their anesthesiologist only as the "doctor behind the mask" who helps them sleep through surgery without pain and who wakes them up when surgery is over. However, few people realize that beyond ensuring the patient's comfort, today's anesthesiologists' primary role in the operating room is to make informed medical judgments to protect and regulate the patient's critical life functions that are affected by the surgery being performed.

Before surgery, anesthesiologists evaluate the patient's medical condition and formulate an anesthetic plan for each individual patient taking into consideration that patient's physical status.

During surgery, advanced technology is used to monitor the body's functions. Anesthesiologists must interpret these sophisticated monitors in order to appropriately diagnose, regulate, and treat the body's organ systems while a personalized, very delicate balance of anesthetic medications is administered.

At the conclusion of surgery, anesthesiologists reverse the effects of the anesthetic medications, and return the patient to consciousness once again. They maintain the patient in a comfortable state during recovery and are involved in the provision of critical care medicine in the intensive care unit. Anesthesiologists also are involved in the practice of chronic pain management.



What is Anesthesia?

Anesthesia is the administration of a drug and/or gas to numb part of your body or to create a state of unconsciousness. The main types of anesthesia are local, regional, and general.

Local Anesthesia numbs part of your body while you remain conscious. It is routinely used by many doctors in their offices for simple procedures such as sewing up a cut or removing a skin growth.

Regional Anesthesia is similar to local in that you remain awake. However, in many cases you may be given a sedative. Regional Anesthesia can be used for more extensive procedures than local anesthesia. Two types of regional anesthesia are spinal and epidural.

Spinal Anesthesia can be used for many operations below the navel, such as rectal, bladder, and prostate operations, as well as operations on the legs.

Epidural Anesthesia can be used for many of the same procedures for which spinal anesthesia is used. Epidural Anesthesia, unlike spinal anesthesia, allows for easy re-injecting of anesthesia during longer operations. It can be used to treat pain for several days after the operation.

General Anesthesia will relax your muscles and make you feel as if you are in a deep sleep. Anesthesia gases or drugs primarily affect the brain. General Anesthesia is usually administered by an anesthesiologist or a nurse anesthetist.

When is it used?

The purpose of anesthesia is to prevent you from feeling pain during a surgical or medical procedure or delivery of a baby.

May I request what type of anesthesia I will receive?

Yes, in certain situations. Some operations can be performed using different anesthetic procedures. Your anesthesiologist, after reviewing your individual situation, will discuss any available options with you. If there is more than one type of anesthetic procedure available, your preference should be discussed with your anesthesiologist in order for the most appropriate anesthetic plan to be made.

How do I prepare for Anesthesia?

The most important thing that you can do to prepare for your surgery is to know your medical and anesthesia history. This includes any medical or surgical illnesses you have now or had in the past, as well as your experience with previous anesthetics. Your surgeon may refer you to your family doctor for a full medical evaluation in order to insure that you are in the optimal state of health at the time of your surgery.

Inform your anesthesiologist of medications that you take on a regular basis. It is essential that you consult with your regular doctor, surgeon or anesthesiologist since certain medications can and should be continued until the time of surgery while others should be discontinued well in advance.

Preparation for anesthesia varies depending on what kind of surgery or medical procedure you are having. Follow the directions your doctor gives you.

What happens during the procedure?

Local anesthesia is usually administered by injecting a specific part of your body with a drug that numbs the nerves. It can also be administered in the form of nose drops or spray. You remain fully conscious.

Spinal anesthetic is injected through a small needle into the fluid space surrounding your spinal cord. The injection is usually painless.

Epidural is injected just outside the sac that contains your spinal fluid.

For general anesthesia, the anesthesiologist examines your heart and lungs and decides on the type of anesthesia and dosage to be used. An injection of a pre-medication drug may be given to relax you before you go to the surgical area. When surgery begins, drugs are given by injection into a vein. If gas is used, it is given through a mask covering your nose and mouth, or through a breathing tube in your throat. In some cases a muscle relaxant is given in addition to the anesthesia. Your heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, and other signs are watched carefully during the procedure.

What happens after the procedure?

Each procedure or type of surgery requires different follow-up. Check with your doctor about what you need to do.