

Adult General Anesthesia

A hospital visit can be an anxious experience. You will meet many doctors, nurses and other people who will do the best to make your experience a positive one. Anesthesiologists are physicians with special training in the anesthetic care of patients. Boys Town anesthesiologists are concerned with many aspects of your care. Their main task is to provide safe, optimal conditions during surgery and to make the entire hospital stay as pleasant and comfortable as possible.

As a patient you should realize what anesthesia is and why it is necessary. Depending on your operation there may be many ways to deliver anesthesia. Operations can be done with regional nerve blocks using "numbing medicine", with sedation, with general anesthesia or with some combination of these. General anesthesia is a state of controlled unconsciousness produced by special medications and gases that have temporary effects on every organ of the body. Because the medications and gases are being regulated constantly during the operation by the anesthesiologist, the patient will remain in this special kind of controlled unconsciousness and will feel no pain, will not wake up during the operation and will remember nothing of the procedure. During surgery, anesthesiologists carefully individualize and regulate the patient's anesthetic agents and skillfully reverse the effects of the medications at the completion of the operation.

Before your operation you will receive a preoperative call by a nurse who will go over important information and instructions regarding your hospital visit. The nurse will be happy to address any special concerns with you.

Upon arrival at the hospital, most patients will receive medicine by mouth that will reduce anxiety and prevent nausea. Subsequent medications may be given through an IV during and after your operation. Your anesthesiologist will visit with you regarding your health history as it pertains to anesthesia and discuss an anesthetic plan tailored to your individual needs.

Following your operation, you will spend some time in the recovery room where you will fully emerge from anesthesia. There, your level of comfort will be addressed, your vital signs followed and your operative site monitored. When you are fully awake and your situation is stable, you will return to your room to complete the recovery process. Different individuals awake from anesthesia at differing rates. Some may be fully alert upon arriving at the recovery room. Others may be groggy for hours following surgery. Although outpatient anesthesia is much safer these days, it still inflicts stress on the body and can cause you to have a "sick" feeling. Nausea and vomiting are occasional side effects after surgery and anesthesia, usually from the medications given to alleviate pain. Another side effect is a sore throat, which would be gone within a day. If you have any concerns about your recovery, you should feel free to discuss them with your anesthesiologist.