

Anesthesia for Your Child



What is anesthesia?

Your child is scheduled for surgery or a procedure and will need anesthesia. Anesthesia is a medicine used for sleep, pain, and to stop your child from moving during surgery. Anesthesia is more than just being asleep. It also includes the care before, during, and after the procedure. Your child will be cared for by a pediatric anesthesiologist (a medical doctor who is trained to give anesthesia to children who are having surgery or a procedure).

Before the procedure, the anesthesiologist will:

- Decide which anesthesia medicine will work the best and is the safest for your child.
 - This will depend on your child's health condition and the type of procedure your child will need.
- Explain the benefits and possible risks of anesthesia
- Answer your questions about anesthesia
- Get your consent (permission to give the anesthesia)

While under anesthesia, the anesthesiologist will continuously monitor your child's vital signs and manage their breathing.

How do I prepare my child for surgery?

A member of the Surgical Admitting staff will call you the day before your child's surgery. The staff member will notify you of two important times:

- 1) The time you need to be at the hospital on the day of surgery.
- 2) The time to stop giving your child solid foods, milk, formula, or clear liquids.

If you have not received a phone call by 4 p.m.:

- **Call Surgical Admitting at 323-361-4500 or**
- **If it is after 4pm, call the Operating Room at 323-361-2571**

****There may be some last-minute changes the surgery schedule. You may receive a call from the hospital on the day of surgery asking you to come earlier than the time you were initially given.**

Your child should **not** eat any solid food after midnight (unless instructed otherwise). Your child's surgery may be cancelled if instructions are not followed so it is very important to follow these instructions. Please see the table below so you know when your child needs to stop eating and drinking:

UNTIL 6 HOURS BEFORE	UNTIL 4 HOURS BEFORE	UNTIL 2 HOURS BEFORE
Formula		
Milk		
Breast Milk	Breast Milk	
Clear Liquids	Clear Liquids	Clear Liquids

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What is considered a clear liquid?

****A clear liquid is any liquid you can see through, like water, Pedialyte®, Gatorade®, apple juice, or white grape juice. Please note that orange juice and milk are not clear liquids.**

What do I need to share with my doctor?

Please let our staff member know if your child has any of any of the following:

- Your child has any chronic, ongoing illnesses (i.e., asthma, hemophilia, lung disease, heart problem, etc.).
- Your child has had trouble with anesthesia in the past, or if anyone in your immediate family has had any problems with anesthesia.
- Your child has recently had any of the following symptoms:
 - fever
 - cough
 - runny nose
 - wheezing
 - diarrhea
 - upset stomach
 - other illness



If these symptoms appear after the phone call with our staff, please call the Surgical Admitting or Operating Room (numbers above). These illnesses may cause problems when your child is receiving anesthesia, and possibly afterward.

What do I do about my child's medications?

During the phone call, our staff will also discuss whether any daily medications should be taken on the day of surgery.

- In general, all aspirin-related products should be stopped *7 to 10 days* before surgery. You will get more information and instructions when you see your child's cardiologist and surgeon.
- Children taking NSAIDs like Motrin, should stop taking these medications *2 days* before surgery.
- Follow any specific instructions your child's surgeon has given you.
- Please bring all your child's medicine bottles and list (prescription and over-the-counter medicines).

Is there anything I need to know if my child has a special medical condition?

- **Colonoscopy patients:** please follow any special clear liquid diet and "Bowel Preparation/Colonoscopy Preparation" instructions given by the Gastroenterology (GI) Department.
 - If you did not receive any instructions, please call the GI RN at 323-361-2777.
 - If no response, please call the operator and page your GI attending or GI resident on call.
- **Diabetic patients:** bring your child's own glucometer or monitoring device.
- **Bi PAP/Ventilator at night patients:** bring your own machine.

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- **Tracheostomy patients:** bring an extra tracheostomy and suction machine.
- **Patient on oxygen:** make sure portable oxygen tank is full.

Is there anything I can do to plan ahead for my child's surgery?

Clothing: please have appropriate clothing for your child to wear when going home after surgery.

- **Circumcisions, hernias, hydrocele repair, hypospadias repair:** Loose pants (i.e., pajama pants, loose shorts, sweatpants). No tight pants, jeans or underwear. Boxers are better.
- **Eyes, scalp, neck procedures:** button tops. No pullover t-shirts or turtleneck shirts.
- **Hand, arm, shoulder, leg, foot procedures:** patient may have a bulky dressing, cast or splint. Bring loose-fitting tops or loose-fitting pants/shorts, socks, slippers.
- **All patients:** extra undergarments.

Eyewear: please bring eyeglasses. Do not wear contact lenses.

Other important information:

- Special consents: bring a copy of legal guardianship and court consent, if available.
 - Foster parent may have to arrange for birth parents to come on day of surgery to consent for surgery and anesthesia.
- No nail polish on hands or feet.
- Hair accessories: no metal on ponytail holder, metal barrettes or bobby pins.
- No jewelry.
 - Keep earrings, necklaces and rings at home.
 - Remove any metal body piercings.
- **Adult patients:** make sure you have someone to drive you home.
- A urine sample will be required for female patients over 12 years of age.

Where do I park on the day of surgery and do you validate parking?

- Park in the Children's Hospital Los Angeles visitors parking lot. Parking below the hospital will be validated when you leave. If you leave from the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), they will validate your parking.
- Overflow parking is available.
- Valet parking is also available.
- Do not park in the Vons parking lot as your car may be towed.

How does my child receive the anesthesia?

- Your nurse or Anesthesia team member will place a small plastic tube, called an IV catheter, in your child's vein. "IV" stands for "intravenous," and is used to give medicine and fluid through the vein. The IV catheter also allows your anesthesia team to give additional medications and fluids.
- Older children may choose to have the IV placed in the pre-operative area before surgery. For younger children, an IV is placed in the operating room, once they are asleep under anesthesia.
- If your child has a serious health condition or needs antibiotics, an IV will be placed in the pre-operative area.



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- Your child may receive medicine by mouth or through the IV catheter in the pre-operative area to help relax them before surgery.
- Next, your child will move into the operating room (OR), where monitors are placed on your child.
- Your child will go to sleep by either breathing an anesthetic gas or by a medication given in their IV. This does not hurt and takes only a few moments to work.
- Your child will have either a small breathing tube placed in their windpipe (trachea) or a special type of mask placed in or over their mouth.
 - These are placed when your child is fully asleep.
 - At the end of surgery, the tube or mask is usually removed before they wake up.

How is pain controlled during and after surgery?

It is very important to lower pain your child might experience after surgery. There are several ways to manage the pain. The anesthesiologist and surgeon will work together to decide the best way to do this. For certain types of surgery, the CHLA Pain Management Service may be asked to help with a plan to take care of your child's pain.

- Before the surgery, your anesthesiologist will discuss different pain relief options.
 - They will tell you about the benefits and possible risks of local or regional anesthesia. This is when the nerves are numbed around the surgery site so that your child does not have pain.
- During the surgery and in the recovery room, pain medicines are often given in the IV.

What happens after surgery?

At the end of the surgery, the anesthesiologist will take your child to the recovery or "wake-up" room.

- A trained nurse will care for your child in the recovery room.
- The nurse will continue checking heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, and oxygen levels.
- You will be able to be with your child soon after they arrive in the recovery room.
- If your child needs pain medicine in the recovery room, a nurse or doctor will help you.
- Once awake, your child can start drinking clear liquids when allowed.

How does my child recover from anesthesia?

- Each child takes a different amount of time to wake-up from anesthesia.
 - It depends on the type of surgery and the types of medications they received during surgery.
 - Once your child is awake, they will either be discharged to home or sent to a hospital room for additional care. Your anesthesiologist and recovery room nurses will decide when your child is ready.
 - The nurse will provide instructions for how to care for your child at home.
 - You will get a prescription, if needed, for pain medicine they can take by mouth.
 - You will also receive information about follow-up needed with your surgeon.
 - Your child may wake up cranky, confused, or even crying. If your child is crying, it may not mean they are in pain.



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- Usually with time your child will calm down after anesthesia. Additional medication may be needed to help them recover.
- Your child may be awake but drowsy from anesthesia. Do not worry if they are asleep on the ride home, nap more than usual or feel tired.

What are some common side effects of anesthesia medicines?

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Sore throat (from the breathing tube or mask)

How safe is pediatric anesthesia?

Several recent international studies have shown that children can safely receive anesthesia without any adverse effect on the brain. If you have questions and would like to talk more with one of our anesthesiologists, please contact them by e-mail at SafeAnesthesia@chla.usc.edu or speak to them on the day of surgery.

What if I have more questions or concerns?

- If you have any questions, you may call the Division of Anesthesiology at 323-361-2262. You can arrange a time to speak with an anesthesiologist before the day of your child's surgery.
- Please remember that all the doctors, nurses and staff caring for your child, will work together to provide the best care possible. We hope to make the entire hospital stay pleasant and comfortable.