

Kids & Teens Dentistry



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Information concerning general anaesthesia

What is general anaesthesia?

General anaesthesia makes you unconscious and unaware of the operation, and is usually accomplished by medication injected into an intravenous (a small plastic tube inserted into a vein of the hand or arm). A tube is inserted into the throat while your child is asleep to help him breathe. All important body functions are closely monitored, and the anaesthetist remains with your child for the entire operation.

What is the role of the anaesthetist?

Your child's anaesthetist is a fully trained doctor (MD) who has spent additional years receiving specialized training in anaesthesia, and is responsible for the overall medical care of your child during the time of his dental surgery. He or she will make your child unconscious and will carefully observe your child's vital signs such as blood pressure, pulse, and breathing throughout the procedure. A variety of sophisticated electronic monitoring devices may also be used.

Why can't my child eat before surgery?

Under normal conditions your body has a mechanism that automatically prevents you from vomiting anything in your lungs. However, when you are unconscious during general anaesthesia this mechanism might not function properly. Therefore, your child must have an empty stomach before receiving any anaesthetic in order to reduce the possibility of this happening. Your child can not eat ANYTHING after midnight (the night before his surgery). Up to **3 hours** before the time of his surgery, he can have a clear liquid like apple juice or water (NO orange juice, NO milk...please verify with us what can be given). If your child is breastfed, do not breastfeed **4 hours** before his surgery. It is essential you respect these guidelines so that your child can have a safe surgery.

What happens after the surgery?

When your child's procedure is completed, your anaesthetist will reverse the anaesthetic effect and take your child to the recovery room. The recovery room nurse, under the supervision of the anaesthetist, is trained to care for your child while he returns to consciousness. His breathing, pulse, blood pressure and temperature will be checked. He will receive oxygen to breathe, and will

be asked to cough and take deep breaths to help keep his lungs clear. Medication for pain will be given as necessary. Once he is fully awake, he will be brought back to you.

How will my child feel after his anaesthetic?

He might have a dry throat and some stiff muscles. He might have some short term memory loss and drowsiness. Some children will experience nausea. His mouth might feel sensitive depending on the type of dental procedures he received.

What are the risks of anaesthesia?

Adverse effects and serious complications are very rare. However, any operation or anaesthetic carries some risks, which depend on the overall health of your child. Since the specific risks vary with each patient, you should ask your anaesthetist what risks your child may face. The whole team will take every precaution to ensure that your child's surgery proceeds smoothly.

What is being done to ensure safety in anaesthesia?

The Canadian Anaesthetist's Society and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada work with hospitals and university departments of anaesthesia, professional organisations, government agencies, and industry to develop standards of training, equipment, drugs, and procedures to ensure that Canadians receive the highest quality anaesthesia care. The primary goal is always patient safety and, thanks to the efforts of all those in the field, modern anaesthesia has become very safe.

Information on the internet:

The Canadian Anaesthetists' Society website is open to the general public. Visit the CAS Home Page at this address:
<http://www.cas.ca>