

ANAESTHESIA

Undergoing a procedure in hospital can be a daunting experience.
We hope this information will help you.

Metropolitan Anaesthetic Group

Our aim is to set and promote the highest level of professional standards in anaesthetic practice. Our anaesthetists are all medical doctors with a further five or more years of specialist anaesthesia training including airway and pain management and resuscitation and crisis management.

Our office is here to assist you with any queries you may have before and following your procedure and will put you in touch with your anaesthetist where required.

What will your anaesthetist do?

- Assess your health
- Determine the type of anaesthetic that is best and safest for you
- Administer your anaesthesia
- Monitor and care for you constantly throughout your procedure
- Organise and monitor your immediate post operative care, including pain management

Your pre-anaesthetic consultation

Before your procedure, your anaesthetist will discuss with you the options, benefits and risks of anaesthesia, and formulate a plan based upon:

- Your general health
- Your medications
- Any allergies or reactions to medications or foods
- Any previous anaesthesia
- The details of this procedure
- Any specific concerns you may have

Risks and complications

Australia is one of the safest places in the world for anaesthesia care. However, with any medical or surgical procedure, there are risks and potential complications. Generally, the most common side effects include sore throat, drowsiness and nausea or vomiting. Other risks related to your specific procedure and health status will be explained by your anaesthetist.

More information can be obtained in the Patient Information section of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists (ASA) website or from Australia New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) website: <http://www.anzca.edu.au/patients>

Types of anaesthesia

Your anaesthesia will vary depending upon the part of the body involved, the procedure being performed, your health and personal wishes and the assessment by your anaesthetist.

General:

Where you are put into a controlled state of unconsciousness until after your procedure.

Sedation:

Where you will have a decreased awareness of your surroundings. Some patients may have little or no recall of the procedure afterwards.

Regional:

Which includes nerve block, spinal block or epidural(s) techniques. This anaesthetic numbs the surgical region and to ensure your comfort, may be given in conjunction with sedation.

Local:

Where local anaesthetic is injected directly around the surgical site, numbing the local area. This may also be given in conjunction with sedation.

Following your procedure

- You will be moved to a post anaesthetic care unit where you will be closely monitored.
- In the immediate post operative period you will be drowsy and may be administered oxygen, anti-pain and anti-nausea medication.
- You will taken back to the ward when sufficiently awake, stable and comfortable.

Anaesthesia Fees

Fees are determined by the complexity and duration of your anaesthesia and are generally midway between the Medicare Benefit Schedule and the AMA recommended fee. Medicare and private health fund rebates do not usually cover the full cost of private anaesthetic fees. So, for many procedures there will be an “out of pocket” expense or “gap” for you to pay.

Our Fee Responsibilities

- To inform you of the anticipated anaesthetic fees prior to your procedure, where this is practical.
- To help you to understand the fees.
- To issue your account in a timely manner unless prepayment of the anaesthetic fee is required prior to surgery.
- To comply with the HIC billing requirements

Your Fee Responsibilities

- To ensure that you understand the quoted fee.
- To ensure that your account is paid within the required time.
- To contact us if you have any queries or concerns regarding fees, or if you will have significant difficulty paying the fees. Please do not hesitate to contact us prior to your procedure.

How to Prepare for Safer Anaesthesia and Recovery

- Improve your fitness by stopping smoking and consuming less alcohol.
- Keep as active as you can each day.
- Inform your surgeon and anaesthetist of health issues, and tell them if you are unwell in the week before anaesthesia.
- Inform your surgeon and anaesthetist of what medications you are taking.
- Check which medications should be stopped or continued, such as blood-thinners, and medications for diabetes, blood pressure, heart conditions.
- Check fasting instructions. As a guide you may have limited solid food (this includes chewing gum) up to 6 hours prior to anaesthesia, and clear fluids (e.g. water, pulp free juice, black tea / coffee - no milk) may be taken up to 2 hours prior to anaesthesia (limited to 200 ml per hour).
- Be sure you have a responsible adult to accompany you home on discharge.
- Contact our office with any queries or concerns.

We hope this information has been helpful, and we wish you a speedy recovery.