

General Anesthesia, Adult

General anesthesia is the use of medicine to make you fall asleep (unconscious) for a medical procedure. General anesthesia must be used for certain procedures. It is often recommended for surgery or procedures that:

- Last a long time.
- Require you to be still or in an unusual position.
- Are major and can cause blood loss.
- Affect your breathing.

The medicines used for general anesthesia are called general anesthetics. During general anesthesia, these medicines are given along with medicines that:

- Prevent pain.
- Control your blood pressure.
- Relax your muscles.
- Prevent nausea and vomiting after the procedure.

Tell a health care provider about:

- Any allergies you have.
- All medicines you are taking, including vitamins, herbs, eye drops, creams, and over-the-counter medicines.
- Your history of any:
 - Medical conditions you have, including:
 - High blood pressure.
 - Bleeding problems.
 - Diabetes.
 - Heart or lung conditions, such as:
 - Heart failure.
 - Sleep apnea.
 - Asthma.
 - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
 - Current or recent illnesses, such as:
 - Upper respiratory, chest, or ear infections.
 - Cough or fever.
 - Tobacco or drug use, including marijuana or alcohol use.
 - Depression or anxiety.
 - Surgeries and types of anesthetics you have had.
 - Problems you or family members have had with anesthetic medicines.
- Whether you are pregnant or may be pregnant.
- Whether you have any chipped or loose teeth, dentures, caps, bridgework, or issues with your mouth, swallowing, or choking.

What are the risks?

Your health care provider will talk with you about risks. These may include:

- Allergic reaction to the medicines.
- Lung and heart problems.
- Inhaling food or liquid from the stomach into the lungs (aspiration).
- Nerve injury.

- Injury to the lips, mouth, teeth, or gums.
- Stroke.
- Waking up during your procedure and being unable to move. This is rare.

These problems are more likely to develop if you are having a major surgery or if you have an advanced or serious medical condition. You can prevent some of these complications by answering all of your health care provider's questions thoroughly and by following all instructions before your procedure.

General anesthesia can cause side effects, including:

- Nausea or vomiting.
- A sore throat or hoarseness from the breathing tube.
- Wheezing or coughing.
- Shaking chills or feeling cold.
- Body aches.
- Sleepiness.
- Confusion, agitation (delirium), or anxiety.

What happens before the procedure?

When to stop eating and drinking

Follow instructions from your health care provider about what you may eat and drink before your procedure.

If you do not follow your health care provider's instructions, your procedure may be delayed or canceled.

Medicines

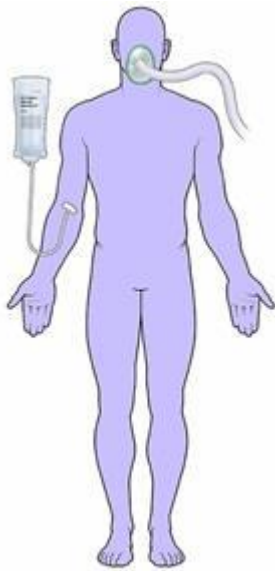
Ask your health care provider about:

- Changing or stopping your regular medicines. These include any diabetes medicines or blood thinners you take.
- Taking medicines such as aspirin and ibuprofen. These medicines can thin your blood. **Do not** take them unless your health care provider tells you to.
- Taking over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, and supplements.

General instructions

- **Do not** use any products that contain nicotine or tobacco for at least 4 weeks before the procedure. These products include cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and vaping devices, such as e-cigarettes. If you need help quitting, ask your health care provider.
- If you brush your teeth on the morning of the procedure, make sure to spit out all of the water and toothpaste.
- If told by your health care provider, bring your sleep apnea device with you to surgery (if applicable).
- If you will be going home right after the procedure, plan to have a responsible adult:
 - Take you home from the hospital or clinic. You will not be allowed to drive.
 - Care for you for the time you are told.

What happens during the procedure?



- An IV will be inserted into one of your veins.
- You will be given one or more of the following through a face mask or IV:
 - A sedative. This helps you relax.
 - Anesthesia. This will:
 - Numb certain areas of your body.
 - Make you fall asleep for surgery.
- After you are unconscious, a breathing tube may be inserted down your throat to help you breathe. This will be removed before you wake up.
- An anesthesia provider, such as an anesthesiologist, will stay with you throughout your procedure. The anesthesia provider will:
 - Keep you comfortable and safe by continuing to give you medicines and adjusting the amount of medicine that you get.
 - Monitor your blood pressure, heart rate, and oxygen levels to make sure that the anesthetics do not cause any problems.

The procedure may vary among health care providers and hospitals.

What happens after the procedure?

- Your blood pressure, temperature, heart rate, breathing rate, and blood oxygen level will be monitored until you leave the hospital or clinic.
- You will wake up in a recovery area. You may wake up slowly.
- You may be given medicine to help you with pain, nausea, or any other side effects from the anesthesia.

Summary

- General anesthesia is the use of medicine to make you fall asleep (unconscious) for a medical procedure.
- Follow your health care provider's instructions about when to stop eating, drinking, or taking certain medicines before your procedure.
- Plan to have a responsible adult take you home from the hospital or clinic.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.