



ANESTHESIA & SEDATION

YOUR CHILD'S GENERAL ANESTHESIA

This leaflet explains what to expect when your child comes into Mubadala Health Dubai to have a procedure or an operation with a general anesthetic. It has been written by anesthetists and specialist nurses, working together with patient representatives and parents.

ANESTHESIA AND ANESTHESIOLOGISTS

A general anesthetic ensures that your child is unconscious and free of pain during an operation or procedure.

Anesthesiologists are specialist doctors whose responsibility it is to keep your child asleep, comfortable, and safe during their surgery/procedure. They are also experts in managing pain and sickness that may sometimes happen afterwards.

Anesthetics are the drugs that are used to start and maintain anesthesia.

- Some anesthetics start with an injection into a vein using a plastic tube called a cannula but may be continued by breathing a gas.
- Other anesthetics start with breathing a gas and then a cannula will be put in when your child is asleep.

Preoperative assessment clinic

The appointment for Preoperative assessment clinic or Pre-anesthesia Clinic will be arranged to ask about your child's health, medication and allergies. The anesthetic team will organize extra tests (bloods, diagnostic images, etc.) that might be necessary and will discuss the options for anesthesia as well as risks.

The anesthetist or pre-assessment nurse will usually ask you about your child's previous experiences with anesthetics or injections.

Your and your child's wishes are of the utmost importance, and we want to work with you to offer the best care possible for your family.

You and your child may be able to choose how anesthesia and other medications are administered. Occasionally, there are medical reasons why things must be performed in a particular manner; these will be explained to you. Unless you comprehend and agree with what has been prepared, nothing will occur.

They will show you and your child the day stay unit where they will be admitted and the anesthetic team will give you information about your child's surgery (fasting instructions, washing, removal of metal works, etc.)

You will be able to raise any issues you have on the day of surgery or before.

Preparing your child – Parents' role

- Discuss with your child why they must go to the day stay unit, when they will enter, and what they can expect.
- Everything must be conveyed to your child in a manner that they can comprehend. If you find it difficult to speak with your child, members of our nursing staff can provide explanations and encourage play-based conversation. They have extensive experience caring for children through surgical procedures.
- Using simple language to explain the procedure or examination to your child will aid in their recovery. Inform them of their procedure or investigation's duration and the likely time they will be in the day stay unit.
- Encourage your child to discuss the procedure and to ask questions. Books, games, and tales can be beneficial.
- Your nurse can advise you on what you should bring on the day, but please take any regular medication your child usually takes in the original packaging.
- Your child can assist in packing his or her own bag and choosing which clothes and toys to bring. Please inform us in advance of any unique needs your child may have, and we will do everything possible to accommodate them.

NOT WELL JUST BEFORE SURGERY?

It is important that you call Mubadala Health Dubai if your child develops a significant cough or cold within two weeks of the operation, or diarrhea or vomiting within a few days of the operation. It may be necessary to delay the operation until your child is better. Coughs and colds can make children, especially those who are younger, more likely to have difficulties with their breathing under the anesthetic and put them at higher risk of chest infection. It is also important to notify us if your child has been in recent contact with chicken pox, measles or other infections.

Vaccinations are an important medical intervention, and we encourage all parents to follow UAE's government vaccination guidelines. (<https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/health-and-fitness/health-of-vulnerable-groups/childrenshealth>)

Recent vaccination is not normally a problem for children having an anesthetic unless they develop a high temperature just before they are due to have surgery, in which case it is sometimes better to delay surgery. This is very unusual, so we would advise parents to continue with planned vaccinations and not postpone them because of a planned surgery.



On the day of your child's operation

On the Day Fasting

- Children must have empty stomachs for the anesthetic. This is very important to protect their lungs from any stomach contents when they are asleep.
- Your child must have no food for 6 hours before the anesthetic.
- Your child must have no water for 2 hours before the anesthetic.
- Your child must have no breast milk 4 hours before the surgery.
- We will try our best to minimize your child's fasting times because we understand how tough it can be for them but fasting is necessary for a safe operation.

Delaying the operation or investigation

- Occasionally the anesthetist may learn something about your child that means it would be safer not to do the procedure on that day. This could happen if your child has a bad cold, has a rash, or has eaten food too recently.

Premedication

- Premedication (premed) refers to drugs that are sometimes administered prior to an anesthetic. Some medications help your child relax, while others are prescribed for other reasons.
- Not every child requires a premed; depending on the type of surgery and your child's condition, you will often be able to help decide whether your child requires a premed with the anesthetist.
- If your child requires premedication, it will most likely be administered as a liquid; however, injections may be required on occasion.
- Premedication is given prior to the anesthetic and may make your child drowsier after the operation or investigation. If this is the case, and you intend to bring him or her home the same day, this may be delayed.
- Premedication medications include:
 - Sedatives to alleviate your child's anxiety.
 - Pain relievers, such as paracetamol, can be useful at the end of the procedure.
 - Medicines to protect your child from anesthetic side effects (for example, nausea).
 - An additional dose of treatment for illnesses such as asthma.

Going to the Operating Theatre

- We will provide a gown for your child to wear, but they will be able to wear their underwear.
- Your child may be transported to the operating room in a bed, on a trolley, walking, or being carried, and can always be accompanied by you (if under 16 years) and a nurse.
- Your child will be allowed to bring a toy or comforter, and

you will usually be allowed to stay with him or her until he or she is unconscious.

- Your child may be given an injection through a cannula (small needle) or an anesthetic gas to breathe; the anesthetic may be administered while your child is sitting on your lap.
- You are not permitted to accompany your child during the surgery, so a nurse will accompany you to the waiting area and will note your phone number to keep in contact.

AFTER THE SURGERY

- A specialist nurse cares for each child until he or she regains consciousness and is comfortable enough to go home.
- During the anesthetic, pain relievers are administered to ensure that your child is as comfortable as possible after surgery. The procedure will determine the type and strength of pain relief provided.
- You will have the opportunity to discuss and help plan the type of pain relief (analgesia) your child will receive following their operation. This will be with the anesthesiologist, surgeon, or ward nurses.

AFTERWARDS

Some children find a hospital visit worrying. A few children do not sleep well after a stay in

hospital. They may be clingy and worried about leaving you. Their behavior may be more

difficult than before. This will usually return to normal within three to four weeks.

Risks and side effects associated with your child's anesthetic

Serious problems are uncommon with modern anesthetics. Most children recover quickly and are soon back to normal after their operation and anesthetic. Many children may feel sick or have a sore throat. These usually last a short time. Medicines to treat vomiting and sickness are available and often given.

For a child in good health having minor surgery, it is very common (more than 1 in 10 children) to have:

- a headache or a sore throat
- sickness or dizziness
- agitation on waking.

Looking at rarer complications, approximately 1 in 10,000 children develop a serious allergic reaction to the anesthetic. The risk of death from anesthesia for healthy children having minor or moderate nonemergency surgery is less than 1 in 100,000. Most of the deaths that occur around the time of surgery are not directly caused by the anesthetic but by other reasons connected with the health of an individual or the operation they are having.



RISK EXPLAINED

People vary in how they interpret words and numbers. This scale is provided to help.

Very Common:	1 in 10 people
Common:	1 in a 100 people
Uncommon:	1 in a 1,000 people
Rare:	1 in 10,000 people
Very rare:	1 in 100,000 people

In modern anesthesia, serious problems are uncommon.

The likelihood of a serious risk or complication is higher if your child has a serious illness, a complicated medical background, or is under one year of age and/or having a major operation.

Children with significant illness or babies having surgery sometimes have particular risks associated with the anesthetic. The anesthetist can discuss this with you before the operation.

Modern equipment, training and drugs have made having an anesthetic very safe, although all risk cannot be removed completely.

There is ongoing research into the possible long-term effects of anesthesia in babies and very young children. At present there is no strong evidence that anesthetics are harmful to development, and it is important to consider that any risk should be balanced against the overall importance of providing anesthesia for a procedure or surgery.

More information: if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mubadala Health on: 800 77