

Are There Risks?

There are always risks associated with surgery and anaesthesia. The risk of complications increases with age, obesity, complexity of the surgery and severity of co-existing medical problems. These risks can be minimised by good anaesthetic practice. Nevertheless, some common side effects can occur which include: nausea, vomiting, sore throat, bruising and pain at the IV site, muscle aches, headache, dizziness and restlessness.

There are also some rarer complications including: breathing difficulties, allergic reactions, teeth, lip and tongue damage, infection, thrombosis and spinal headache. Extremely rare complications include: awareness, eye injury, brain, spinal cord or nerve injury, heart attack, lung, liver or kidney damage. Remember, the possibility of a serious complication, including death, is quite remote, but does exist. Rest assured, the standard of anaesthetic care in Australia is second to none. There is no safer place in the world to have an anaesthetic than in Australia.

Anaesthetic Fee

All Anaesthetic fees and charges are provided to you formally by the Anaesthetist. An estimate may have been provided to you pre-operatively which remains an estimate fee only.

Medications

Regular medication should be continued prior to operation unless your surgeon advises you otherwise with the exception of Aspirin, Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatories and Anti-coagulants. These medications should be ceased 1 week prior to your surgery. Your allocated Anaesthetist can provide you with additional information. You must ensure your anaesthetist and surgeon are fully aware of the medication you take and fill in all forms prior to surgery accurately. If you have any query regarding your anaesthetic, do not hesitate to discuss this when your anaesthetist visits you before

Fasting

You will be given clear instructions about when to stop eating and drinking prior to your procedure. It is very important that you follow these instructions.

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Information About Anaesthesia



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Safe Hands

The information provided is intended to give you more understanding of the process of anaesthesia, and to help you make an informed choice by providing you with some idea of the associated risks to you. The discussions about risk are general in nature, and will vary according to your general health and the type of surgery you are having. Your anaesthetist will see you prior to your procedure in the hospital or day surgery, usually on the day of your procedure. You can request a consultation with your anaesthetist prior to your procedure if you have any special concerns. STACE Anaesthetists website www.stacedocs.com.au also has some useful information.

What is Anaesthesia:?

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Anaesthesia is a state where pain is not experienced during surgery or a medical procedure. To attain this, your anaesthetist may put you into a state of carefully controlled unconsciousness, as in General Anaesthesia, or only a part of the body may be numbed, as in Local or Regional Anaesthesia.

General Anaesthesia:?

General Anaesthesia

A large range of modern drugs and techniques are available and are used by the anaesthetist to suit each individual patient and the operation

Local Anaesthesia

Local anaesthetics are applied to or injected into specific areas to numb a region to be operated upon. Local anaesthesia may be combined with general anaesthesia or sedation. An epidural, spinal or regional local anaesthetic block may allow you to be awake during a major operation.

Your Anaesthetist

Your anaesthetist is the specialist doctor who will administer your anaesthetic. Your surgeon usually chooses your anaesthetist and they work together as a team to look after you.

Before Surgery

You will be asked to fill in a patient questionnaire. Your anaesthetist will see you pre-operatively usually in the hospital or day surgery and ask you questions about: Previous anaesthetics and operations, Any medications you are taking, Any allergies you have, Your general health—past and present medical problems, Anaesthetic problems experienced by any family member. Your anaesthetist will note your answers, your physical features and your vital signs. If needed, a detailed physical examination will be performed and further tests ordered. You or your surgeon may also request a pre-hospital consultation with your anaesthetist, in certain instances

During your Procedure

Your anaesthetist is responsible for your well-being during your operation and immediately afterwards. At the time of operation 'sleep' is usually induced by a combination of drugs injected into a vein. After the initial injection, your anaesthetist will very carefully administer a variety of drugs and gases to bring you to exactly the state of anaesthesia appropriate for your physical status, general health and particular operation. During the operation your anaesthetist constantly monitors your depth of consciousness, pulse, blood pressure and respirations and level of oxygen in the blood, supporting and controlling these as necessary.

After your Procedure

At the completion of the operation you will be transferred to the recovery suite. This is a special area close to the operating theatre, staffed by nurses specially trained to look after patients who are waking up after anaesthesia. Your anaesthetist will supervise this recovery period until you are safely awake and will arrange for any post-operative medication you may require for pain or nausea.