

Anesthesia

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't my child eat before surgery?

While saying "NO" to your child may seem harsh, we are truly concerned about their safety. It is very important that your child adheres to the fasting rules prior to their surgery. (see Fasting table below) The reason is this: Under General Anesthesia, the food contents in the stomach may come up the esophagus, and into the mouth, then get aspirated into the lungs. This is a very rare, but serious complication of General Anesthesia.

We recommend your child not eat after midnight, however, if their surgery is late in the day, or they get hungry/grumpy, they may eat as the table indicates. The child needs to be FASTING for at least the hours shown, or their surgery will be postponed or cancelled.

Fasting

Please refer to the following.

FOOD	EXAMPLE	HRS
Clear Liquid	Water, apple juice, soda, Pedialyte, popsicles, Kool-Aid	2
Human Milk	Human breast milk	4
Milk	Cow milk, formula	6
Food	Toast, cereal, orange juice	6
Meal	Meats, eggs, french fries, fatty food, proteins	8

How will my child go to sleep?

First, there will be NO needle or shot prior to them falling asleep. One of the dental team, with whom your child may already be familiar, will take your child back to the treatment room, where a (flavored) mask is placed on his or her face. An anesthetic gas is turned on, and within a few nice deep breaths, your child quickly drifts off to sleep. Once your child is asleep, an IV is started, and a breathing tube is placed into their nose to help them breathe during surgery. Your child is kept asleep the entire time during the surgery, and prior to waking up, the IV and breathing tube is removed.

Can I be with my child as they fall off to sleep?

Generally, no. The reasons are this:

- Our total priority is your child's safety.
- The treatment rooms are small, with lots of specialized equipment. The presence of an additional person increases the likelihood of contamination and/or injury.
- Parents tend to ask questions, which takes our focus away from the child and toward the adult. Your child deserves our undivided attention.

How long will it take my child to wake up from Anesthesia?

The medications used are VERY short acting, and wear off rapidly. The wake up process usually takes only 10-15 minutes. As soon as it is deemed safe, we ask the parents to come back and be with their child as they are finishing waking up.

Why is my child grumpy or tearful after surgery?

Children may wake up grumpy and tearful after surgery. This is NOT because of pain, but because they may feel disoriented or dizzy. This may be the first time they have ever felt like this, and they are often confused. As they are awakening it is best to talk to them and reassure them you are at their side. Luckily for all involved, this grumpiness only lasts 5-10 minutes then goes away.... Unfortunately, it MAY come back when they are teenagers and never seem to go away ☹️