



Manchester University
NHS Foundation Trust

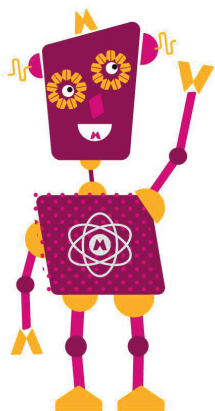
Your General Anaesthetic

Information for Young People
Royal Manchester Children's Hospital



Introduction

A general anaesthetic is given by specialist doctors called anaesthetists.



General anaesthesia keeps you deeply asleep and comfortable during surgery or other medical procedures.

This leaflet is to give you more information about general anaesthesia, how it is given, and how you may feel before and after.

More information (including videos) can also be found using the QR code below.



Questions can also be asked to your anaesthetist and surgeon on the day.

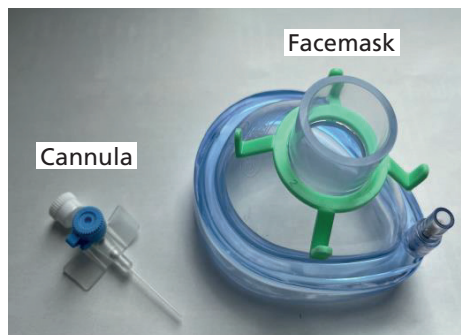
How do I get ready for my operation?

After your surgeon has decided that you need an operation, you will be seen by a special nurse who will want to find out more information.

You will come along with your parent or guardian – remember to bring any medications you take or inhalers you use. You may need more tests like an X-ray or blood sample, or they may just ask you some more questions. This is called the pre-assessment appointment.

A numbing cream is applied to your hand before we do this, so it is not sore.

Anaesthetics can also be given by breathing a special gas through a mask.



What is General Anaesthesia?

A general anaesthetic means you are deeply asleep. This allows a procedure or operation to happen without you being aware or feeling pain. It is not exactly like normal sleep – the anaesthetic medication is given the whole time during the procedure to keep you asleep, and stopped to wake you up when the procedure finishes.

Anaesthetics are usually started by giving medicine through a plastic tube (called a cannula) placed into a blood vessel on the back of your hand.

What happens on the day?

You will be asked to come to hospital for early in the morning or early afternoon. Please bring one or both of your parents, or your guardian.

It is best that general anaesthetics are carried out when you are well. If you are unwell, please ask your parent or guardian to contact the hospital.

All children coming for a procedure under general anaesthetic should have an empty stomach. This is called being 'kept nil by mouth'

or 'fasted'. It is important as this makes the anaesthetic safer. If you don't have an empty stomach, you are more likely to vomit under anaesthetic which can give you a chest infection.

So:

- You must not have anything to eat or drink (except water) for 6 hours before your procedure (including no chewing gum)
- You can have water up to 1 hour before your procedure

You will then meet your anaesthetic doctor, they will talk to you, and you can ask questions. There are different ways of having an anaesthetic, so we can help find the best way for you.

There is often waiting time before your operation or procedure – bring a book or tablet with you to keep you busy.

Going to sleep

Your parent or guardian can come with you to the anaesthetic room. You might be asked to put on a hospital gown beforehand.

In the anaesthetic room you will be asked to sit on a bed, and we put on some stickers and wires to measure your heart rate and blood pressure. You will see the anaesthetic doctors you met earlier in the day.

The anaesthetic doctor and theatre nurses will talk you through everything.

If the cannula and injection of medications is used to go to sleep, some people complain of 'coldness/tingling', or slight discomfort in their hand or up their arm. Sometimes you feel dizzy, or get a taste in your mouth. This is normal.

If the mask is used it will likely take a couple of minutes. The medicine has a sweetish smell that gradually increases, sometimes it makes you cough.

For older children and young adults, we usually advise the cannula.

Once you are asleep your parent or guardian will be asked to return to the ward to wait for you.

The anaesthetist will place a small mask or tube in your mouth whilst

you are asleep. You may be aware of this right at the end as you are waking up.

The anaesthetist will stay with you through the whole procedure or surgery, making sure you are ok.

You will also be given anti-sickness medicine and pain relief so you are comfortable when you wake up.

When can I go home?

You will wake up in the recovery room and be looked after by a nurse. Your parent/guardian will be asked to come to see you as soon as you are awake. You will then go back to the ward.

If you are having a 'day-case' procedure, you can go home after a couple of hours – once you are fully awake, have had something to eat and drink, and can get to the toilet.

Risks and side effects

Anaesthetics are generally very safe. For most young people the risks are low. Please talk about this with your parents or guardian as well as your doctors.

General risks and side effects of a general anaesthetic include:

Sore throat – This is common but recovers quickly.

Tooth damage – This is more likely if you have wobbly teeth or dental caps. A temporary mild cut to the lip or tongue can also occur.

Bruising around cannula site – this will go after a few days.

Pain – The anaesthetist will give you pain relief before you wake up so you are as comfortable as possible. Sometimes more pain relief is needed for a few days, either at home, or whilst you stay at hospital.

Drowsiness/confusion – this is common for a short period of time as the general anaesthetic and pain medications wear off.

Feeling sick/vomiting – Medicines will be given to you to help prevent or treat sickness.

Breathing Problems – Young people who already have a breathing problem, who have had recent coughs or colds, who smoke or

whose parents smoke, or who are having certain operations (ear, nose and throat) are more likely to have breathing difficulties during an anaesthetic. This is still quite rare. We can usually treat these whilst you are still asleep. Occasionally these problems require more support after an anaesthetic.

Medication reactions – It is rare, but you can have an allergic reaction to medicines we give you during the anaesthetic. We have medicine in theatre we can use to treat allergic reactions.

The QR code below can be used to read more information by the Royal College of Anaesthetists about risks of anaesthesia for children and young people. Please ask your doctors and nurses questions if you have them.



Contacts:

Schedulers: 0161 701 525

Pre-assessment nursing team:
0161 2765130

Questions

We understand that there may be questions that either you or your parent/guardian would like answering. Most of us forget what we were going to ask the doctor or the nurse.

Please write your questions on the opposite page.

Your General Anaesthetic **Page 7**

No Smoking Policy

Please protect our patients, visitors and staff by adhering to our no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted in any of our hospital buildings or grounds, except in the dedicated smoking shelters in the grounds of our Hospital site.

For advice and support on how to give up smoking, go to www.nhs.uk/smokefree.

Translation and Interpretation Service

It is our policy that family, relatives or friends cannot interpret for patients. Should you require an interpreter ask a member of staff to arrange it for you.

تتص سیاستنا علی عدم السماح لأفراد عائلة المرضى أو اقاربهم أو اصدقائهم بالترجمة لهم. اذا احتجت الى مترجم فيرجى ان تطلب ذلك من احد العاملين ليرتب لك ذلك.

بماری یہ پالیسی ہے کہ خاندان، رشتہ دار اور دوست مریضوں کے لئے ترجمہ نہیں کر سکتے۔ اگر آپ کو مترجم کی ضرورت ہے تو عملے کے کسی رکن سے کہیں کہ وہ آپ کے لئے اس کا بندوبست کر دے۔

ইহা আমাদের নীতি যে, একজন রোগীর জন্য তার পরিবারের সদস্য, আত্মীয় বা কোন বন্ধু অনুবাদক হতে পারবেন না। আপনার একজন অনুবাদকের প্রয়োজন হলে তা একজন কর্মচারীকে জানান অনুবাদকের ব্যবস্থা করার জন্য।

Nasze zasady nie pozwalają na korzystanie z pomocy członków rodzin pacjentów, ich przyjaciół lub ich krewnych jako tłumaczy. Jeśli potrzebują Państwo tłumacza, prosimy o kontakt z członkiem personelu, który zorganizuje go dla Państwa.

Waa nidaamkeena in qoys, qaraaboamasaaxiiboaysanu tarjumikarinbukaanka. Haddiiaad u baahatotarjumaankacodsoxubinka mid ah shaqaalahainaykuusameeyaan.

我们的方针是，家属，亲戚和朋友不能为病人做口译。如果您需要口译员，请叫员工给您安排。



@MFTNHS



Follow us on Facebook

www.mft.nhs.uk

© Copyright to Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

TIG 44/23

Ratified 1st November 2023

Review Date 31st October 2026

(SF Taylor CM19930)