



Anaesthetic information for carers
(An-es-th-e-tic)

Anaesthesia and pain medication

(An-es-th-e-si-a)

It is common for the anaesthetist (an-e-th-e-tist) (sleep and pain doctor) to start pain medicine when bub has to have surgery. **Yarn to the anaesthetist** before the surgery about pain medication they may use.

The anaesthetist will use different types of pain medication for different types of surgeries. Pain relief is very safe.

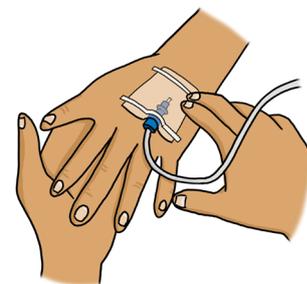
Minor surgery

- Paracetamol (Panadol) and ibuprofen (Nurofen) can help with pain before or after the procedure.



Major surgery

- Morphine or similar medication are used to help with pain after the procedure.
- The nurse will give the pain medicine through the drip in bub's arm or hand (called an intravenous line or IV for short).
- Older children may be given control of their pain relief by using a special pump and hand piece.



Local anaesthetics

- Local anaesthetic injections are used to help with pain after a procedure. This can be given as a single injection (Caudal) or by placing a fine tube at the base of the spine to give the pain medication through Epidural (Ep-i-due-ral).
- Epidural and "caudal" injections are safe.

Yarn to the anaesthetist about all medical procedures as there are small risks and side effects.



Upset

- Some children can become upset and may need to be held when they are given the anaesthetic. It can be upsetting for you seeing bub so upset, but you can help to calm them.



IV difficulties

- It may take a few tries to put an IV drip into bub's vein.
- There can be bruising on bub's hand, but it will fade quickly.



Side effects

Sore throat

- A tube that is placed in bub's throat for breathing during the procedure may make bub's throat sore. The sore throat will feel better after a day or so.



Behaviour changes

- Some children may have changes in their behaviour like bedwetting or problems falling asleep, night terrors or strong dreams. If this does not stop after a few weeks, please see your local doctor/GP or health clinic.

Pain after surgery

- Pain for your bub might be different from other children. Sometimes children can still feel some pain even with pain medicine. The doctors will always be available to help keep bub feeling comfortable.

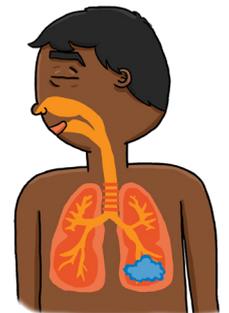


Local anaesthetic block side effects

- Side effects from the anaesthetic block are uncommon. Some children don't like the numbness or weakness they feel from the block. This feeling will pass.
- Permanent nerve damage, infection or fits are very rare side effects from the anaesthetic block.

Pneumonia

- There is a small risk of pneumonia during anaesthesia.
- Pneumonia is caused by food or fluid from the stomach going into the lungs. This is why it is very important to make sure bub has an empty tummy (fasted) before the procedure.
- Bubs with pneumonia may need to be cared for in Intensive Care after surgery. They usually have no long-term problems.
- Bubs having emergency surgery are most at risk of pneumonia.



Allergic reactions

- Allergic reactions to anaesthetic are very rare.

Rare problems

For healthy bubs, the risks of serious problems from anaesthesia are very rare.

- Risks of major disability from anaesthesia are very low.
- There is a slight increase in the risk of complications for bubs with big health issues like cerebral palsy.
- Loss of life due to complications from anaesthesia are very, very rare.

Yarn to the anaesthetist or your doctor if you have any worries or concerns about the surgery, procedure or the medication bub will be given.



Anaesthetic information for carers

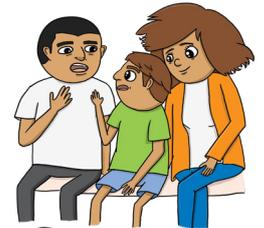
(An-es-th-e-tic)

Getting ready to come to hospital

Bub needs to come to hospital to have a procedure or surgery.

To help bub you can:

- Let them know what may happen when in hospital.
- Answer their questions simply and truthfully. This will help them feel less scared.
- Be calm, bub needs you to support them.
- Yarn with the doctor or nurse about any questions you or bub have.
- Bring their favourite toy.



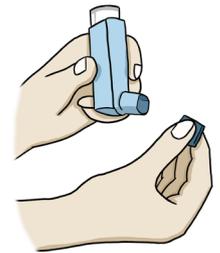
Fasting/ empty tummy

- You will get information about fasting/ empty tummy, 1 - 2 days before the procedure.
- Fasting **is safe** even for small babies; it lowers the risk of vomiting during the procedure.



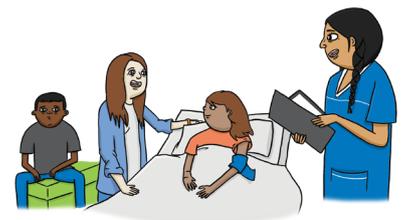
Medications and puffers

- Can be used as normal.
- Yarn with the doctor about any non-prescription herbal or bush medicines.
- Bub may need to stop using medications a week before the procedure.



On the day of the procedure

Before the procedure the anaesthetist (an-e-th-e-tist) - sleep and pain doctor will yarn to you and bub about the procedure. Sleep medicine called anaesthetic (an-es-th-e-tic) is given to bub so they sleep and won't feel any pain or move during their procedure. This is the best time to yarn about any concerns or worries.



Getting ready for the procedure

Local anaesthetic

A nurse will put local anaesthetic cream onto bub's hand. This numbs the hand so when they put the intravenous drip (IV) in, it is as painless as possible.

Pre-operative medication

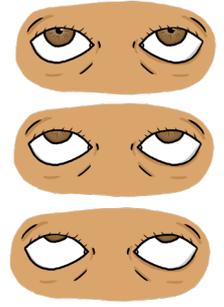
Bub may need medicine (oral sedative) to help calm them before their procedure. Sometimes a sedative can make a child more active and restless.



Going to sleep

Bub is put to sleep in the anaesthetic room before going to the operating theatre.

- To help bub be calm, one parent can stay with them until they fall asleep.
- It can be upsetting to watch bub go to sleep, their eyes may roll, they may twitch, snore and go limp very quickly, this is normal.
- Sometimes bub may need to be held while going to sleep for bub and the staff's safety.
- The anaesthetist will let you know when bub is asleep and then a volunteer will take you to the waiting area.

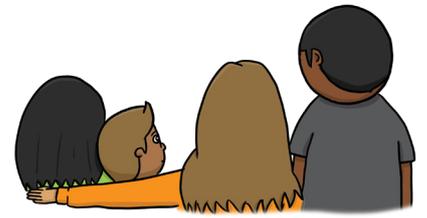


During the procedure/ surgery

- The anaesthetist will stay with bub the whole time helping to keep them asleep and feeling no pain.

Recovery area

- After the procedure bub is taken to the Recovery area where a nurse will watch them wake up.
- 1 parent can come to the Recovery area when bub is awake.
- It takes time to get bub ready for their procedure and for them to wake after their procedure.
- Each child is different so the waking up time is also different.



When they wake up

- Some children can be upset when they wake up in a new and different place. Parents need to be calm and help bub not be scared.
- The nurse will send bub to the ward when they are ready.



Discharge from hospital

If it's safe for bub and the doctors are happy with bub's progress then they may be able to go home on the same day of the procedure. Sometimes bubs may need to stay overnight.

Pain

If bub is in pain after leaving the hospital give them paracetamol (Panadol) or ibuprofen (Nurofen).

Paracetamol (Panadol)

Given at:

Next dose at:



No more than 4 times in 1 day
see packet instructions

Ibuprofen (Nurofen)

Given at:

Next dose at:



No more than 3 times in 1 day
see packet instructions

Food and drink

- Give bub small sips of water and if they feel like food offer food gentle on their tummies like eggs, toast or soup.
- Eating too much or drinking too quickly can make bub nausea/sick and vomit.



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