



Anesthesia (General)



Overview

General anesthesia makes a person unconscious. People call this “put under” or “put to sleep.” But it isn’t the same as regular sleep. A person given general anesthesia cannot feel pain. And, the person won’t remember what happens during a medical procedure.

Types of General Anesthesia

There are two main types of general anesthesia. Intravenous anesthesia is given through a needle. Gas anesthesia is given through a mask or tube. The type used depends on the procedure. An anesthesia provider also looks at the patient’s health, medications, allergies, medical history and past use of anesthesia to decide which type is best for the patient.

During the Procedure

Anesthesia is started before the surgery. A breathing tube or laryngeal mask may be used to help the lungs during the surgery. The anesthesiologist care team watches the patient’s vital signs. They adjust the anesthesia to keep the patient safe and comfortable.

After the Procedure

When the patient wakes up, some side effects are common. Patients may feel sleepy and confused. They may shiver or feel nauseous and vomit. Some patients have dry mouth or a sore throat. These symptoms usually go away quickly.