

ANESTHESIA SIDE EFFECTS



DOING WHAT'S BEST

What are the risks of anesthesia?

While anesthesia is usually very safe, no procedure is without some degree of risk, and your anesthesiologist will discuss this with you prior to your surgery. Nausea or vomiting may be related to anesthesia, the type of surgical procedure, or postoperative pain medications. You should discuss any concerns with your anesthesiologist.

After the procedure

When the surgery is complete, the anesthesia medications are stopped, and you will slowly wake in the operating or recovery room. You'll probably feel groggy and a little confused when you first wake.

You may experience common side effects such as:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Dry mouth
- Sore throat
- Shivering
- Sleepiness
- Mild hoarseness

You may also experience other side effects after you awaken from anesthesia.

Side effects depend on your individual condition and the type of surgery.

Your doctor may give you medications after your procedure to reduce pain and nausea.

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In general, for 24 hours after your anesthesia:

- Do not drink alcoholic beverages or use nonprescription medications.
- Do not drive a car or operate dangerous machinery.
- Do not make important decisions.

You will be given telephone numbers to call if you have any concerns or if you need emergency help after you go home.

What can I expect?

The amount of discomfort you experience will depend on a number of factors, especially the type of surgery. Your doctors and nurses can relieve pain after your surgery with medicines given by mouth, injection, or by numbing the area around the incision. Your discomfort should be tolerable, but do not expect to be totally pain-free.

Patients often experience drowsiness and minor after effects following ambulatory anesthesia, including muscle aches, sore throat, and occasional dizziness or headaches. Nausea may also be present, but vomiting is less common. Side effects usually decline rapidly in the hours following surgery, but it may take several days before they are gone completely. The majority of patients do not feel up to their typical activities the next day, usually due to general tiredness or surgical discomfort. For our elderly patients, it is not uncommon to experience some degree of disorientation or confusion. Plan to take it easy for a few days until you feel back to normal. Know that a period of recovery at home is common and to be expected.