KINGSPORT PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY
making beaming smiles

Pre-Op and Post-Op Instructions for General Anesthesia

Why In-Office General Anesthesia?

In some cases, a child may not be able to tolerate dental treatment while awake or with conscious sedation. This may be due to young age, fear, anxiety, or the need for extensive dental work. For these patients, the dentist may recommend General Anesthesia. With modern anesthesia delivery and monitoring equipment, we provide a safe, convenient, surgery-center-like setting within our office. This helps avoid the inconvenience and high costs associated with a hospital visit.

What to Expect During the Procedure

- Parents/guardians are not permitted in the treatment area.
- Family members will be asked to wait in the lobby.
- Your child will be under the direct supervision of a board-certified anesthesiologist and trained nurses throughout the procedure.
- You will have the opportunity to speak with the anesthesiologist beforehand and are encouraged to ask any questions you may have.

After the procedure, you'll be brought into the recovery area to be with your child as they begin to wake up. They will stay there until they meet the anesthesiologist's discharge criteria.

Preparing for the Appointment

- **Follow all instructions** provided by the anesthesiologist and anesthesia team.
- **Notify us** of any changes to your child's medical history or medications before the appointment.
- **We're happy to answer** any questions you may have.

No School or Daycare: Your child must be under your supervision before and after their appointment. This helps ensure they have not had anything to eat or drink before anesthesia — a critical safety requirement.

Time Commitment: While we do our best to schedule accurately, every child's needs vary. Plan to be at our office for at least 3 hours and ensure your child is supervised for the rest of the day.

Pre-Appointment Call: Our General Anesthesia Coordinator will call prior to the appointment with additional details.

NPO Guidelines – Nothing By Mouth

It is essential that your child has an empty stomach for their safety under general anesthesia. If food or drink is present, it can be vomited and aspirated into the lungs.

- No protein or meat 8 hours before the appointment
- No other solid food 6 hours before
- No clear liquids (Jello, water, Gatorade) within 3 hours of the appointment

If your child takes morning medications, contact us prior to the appointment to speak with the anesthesiologist.

Plan ahead: Check your child's room, car, or backpack for hidden snacks, and remind siblings not to share food.

What to Wear

- Dress your child in a short-sleeved shirt (jackets are okay but must be removable)
- Remove all jewelry
- Diapers or pull-ups are acceptable for younger children

Check-In and Health Screening

At check-in, the anesthesiologist will review your child's medical history and perform a brief exam. If your child develops a fever, cough, or cold before the appointment, notify us immediately — the procedure may need to be rescheduled.

Anesthesia Procedure

- Your child will be brought to the treatment area once cleared.
- The anesthesiologist will use a mask to administer anesthetic gas.
- After your child is relaxed, an IV will be placed, and vital sign monitors will be used.
- The dentist will complete all necessary dental work while your child is fully sedated.

Parents must remain in the waiting area during the procedure.

Recovery

After treatment:

- Your child will move to the recovery room.
- You will be brought in to stay with them as they wake up.

Common experiences during recovery include:

- Temporary red marks from tape or the anesthesia mask
- Minor bleeding in the mouth
- Tiredness, moodiness, or weakness
- Grogginess that may last several hours

A nurse will review aftercare instructions before you leave.

Transportation

- Follow all state laws regarding child safety seats.
- We recommend having a second adult sit with your child in the back seat on the way home.
- Make sure your child's head is upright to help them breathe well.

Home Care Instructions

Activities: Allow your child to rest and nap. Supervise them at all times. Avoid physical activities (bikes, trampolines, swimming, etc.) for the rest of the day. Normal activities can resume the following day.

Diet: Start with clear liquids (water, apple juice, Gatorade). Once tolerated, offer soft foods like applesauce, crackers, or noodles. Avoid meat and dairy for a few hours.

Fever: A slight fever is normal. Keep your child indoors and in a cool place. Call us if the fever exceeds 101°F.

Pain: Discomfort is expected. IV pain meds wear off within a few hours. If local anesthetic was used, your child may remain numb for a while. Follow the pain medication instructions provided. If pain persists, contact us.

Nausea/Vomiting: This may occur. Limit your child to clear liquids until symptoms improve. If vomiting lasts more than 4 hours, contact the anesthesiologist.

Bleeding: Minor bleeding is normal. Follow post-op instructions. Call if bleeding continues longer than expected or seems excessive.

Questions or Concerns?

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If it is after hours, call the office and follow the voicemail instructions for reaching our emergency line. In a true emergency, call 911.