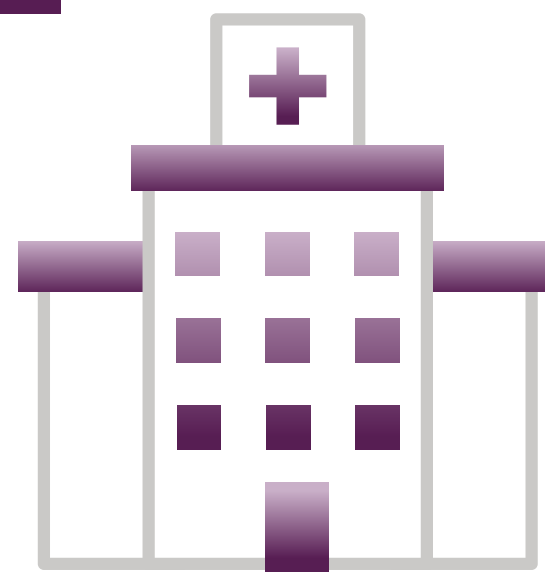


A child's guide to having an anaesthetic



What is an anaesthetic?

An anaesthetic is when a doctor gives you medicine so that you don't feel, hear, or see anything during a test or operation. It's a bit like a really deep sleep. The doctor gives you the anaesthetic for as long as you need it, and when they stop the anaesthetic, you wake up.

Getting ready

It's best if you take a few things with you to the hospital. Bring some pyjamas and your favourite toy or teddy.

Not eating

You must not have any food in your tummy when you have an anaesthetic, so you mustn't have anything to eat for 6 hours before your operation. But keep drinking water until an hour before your operation, so you won't feel too thirsty.



At the hospital

When you arrive at the hospital, the nurse looking after you will take you to your room. The nurse checks your weight, so the doctors know how much medicine to give you later. The nurse will also check a few other things, like your temperature and pulse.

You will be given a name band to wear on your wrist, so everybody can know who you are. The doctor looking after you will also come to see you and answer any questions you may have.

Different kinds of anaesthetics

You will meet the anaesthetist. That's the doctor who will look after you during your anaesthetic.

Anaesthetics can be started with a tiny tube in your hand or with a mask. You can talk about the best way for you. You can have cream on your hands to stop the tiny tube from feeling too sore. The anaesthetic medicine goes into the tiny tube and works very fast indeed.

Nearly time for the operation

Your nurse will ask you to put on a hospital gown; some children prefer to wear their pyjamas. You might be given some medicine to stop you from feeling sore after the operation or to help you feel sleepy before it.

The anaesthetic room

In the anaesthetic room, there are machines called monitors to help look after you all the time. One of your parents can come with you into the room.

During your operation

You won't remember anything, but the anaesthetist and doctor stay with you all the time.



The recovery room

When your operation is finished, the anaesthetist turns off the anaesthetic medicine. A nurse looks after you in the recovery room. When you wake up, one of your parents can come to be with you. If you feel sore, the nurse can give you some medicine to help.

Back on the ward

You will go back to your room on the ward to recover, and your nurse will look after you. When you start to feel hungry, you can have something to drink and eat. There is lots to choose from on our children's menu.

Going home

You should be ready to go home after a few hours.

