

Key Takeaways

Anesthesia Considerations for HIE Families

with Annie Gunning, CCLS, &
Dr. Sami Horani, Anesthesiologist & HIE Parent

Couldn't make it to our Live Q&A?

*Don't worry, we took notes, and like any
good partner, we're willing to share!*





TYPES OF ANESTHESIA & HOW IT'S GIVEN

Types:



General anesthesia

↳ Deep unconsciousness; breathing tube used to support airway



Monitored anesthesia care (MAC/twilight sedation)

↳ Lighter sedation; child breathes on their own; used for shorter or less invasive procedures

How it's given:



IV induction

↳ Most common; medication given through an IV line



Mask induction

↳ Common in anxious or medically complex children; child breathes in gas through a mask; IV placed after they're asleep. No need to worry if this is used for your child.



WHAT IS ANESTHESIOLOGY & WHO IS ON YOUR TEAM?

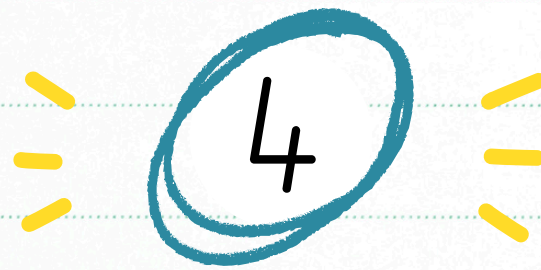
- ★ The anesthesia team keeps your child safe, pain-free, and comfortable from sleep to wake-up
- ★ Three types of providers:
 - ↳ **Anesthesiologists** (physicians)
 - ↳ **CRNAs** (advanced practice nurses)
 - ↳ **Anesthesiology Assistants** (master's-level, available in ~16–17 states)
- ★ If you are speaking with a CRNA or AA during your pre-op conversations, always ask to meet the supervising anesthesiologist as well.

3



HIE-SPECIFIC MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 1 **Neurological:** Most anesthesia medications are seizure-suppressing; share full seizure history, frequency, and medications with the team
- 2 **Respiratory:** Disclose any history of aspiration, secretions, scoliosis, sleep apnea, CPAP/BiPAP, or tracheostomy; notify the team if your child has had a cold or congestion within 6 weeks of surgery
- 3 **GI:** Children with HIE are at higher risk of aspiration; reflux or low tone may require a breathing tube for protection
 - ↳ Fasting guidelines: Clear liquids up to 2 hrs before | Breast milk up to 4 hrs before | Solid food/G-tube feeds up to 8 hrs before (always confirm with your team)
- 4 **IV access:** If your child is a "difficult stick," ask ahead about ultrasound-guided IV placement



PREPARING YOUR CHILD (CHILD LIFE)

- ★ **Preparation is everything** — children cope better when they know what to expect
- ★ **Sensory prep:** Search YouTube for pediatric pre-op videos; request or create a social story; practice sensory elements at home (the mask, cold wipes, etc.); ask about pre-op hospital tours
- ★ **For nonverbal/minimally verbal children:** Bring AAC device or communication board; create an "All About Me" sheet with their name, favorites, comfort needs, and how they show pain or fear
- ★ **Comfort items:** Most hospitals allow a lovey, blanket, or favorite toy in pre-op; items are returned in recovery

5



PARENTAL PRESENCE DURING INDUCTION

- Varies by hospital, anesthesiologist, and procedure complexity — **always ask ahead of time!**
- **If you cannot be present:** a Child Life Specialist can walk with your child, provide comfort, and keep them engaged through separation
- Have a plan for the goodbye moment — a specific phrase, a kiss, a calm goodbye makes it more manageable for everyone

6



THE RECOVERY ROOM



Prepare your child in advance for what they'll wake up with: IV, oxygen, monitors, unfamiliar surroundings (a **Child Life Specialist** can help with this!)



Tips for a smoother recovery:



Dim lighting and quieter machines help with disorientation



Return comfort items as soon as possible



Parent presence is the most powerful calming tool available



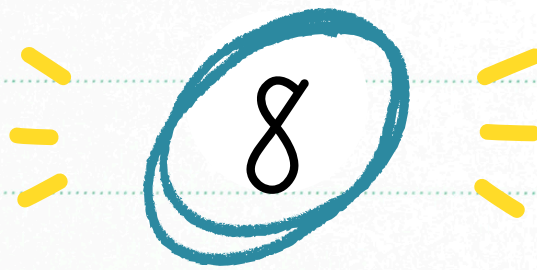
Most children are near their baseline within **30 minutes to an hour** after shorter procedures



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR TEAM

For the anesthesia/surgical team:

- ↳ Who is the supervising anesthesiologist?
- ↳ Is the procedure at a hospital or ambulatory surgery center?
- ↳ Which medications should be continued or held before surgery?
- ↳ Does the hospital have an ultrasound IV team?
- ↳ Is parental presence allowed during induction?
- ↳ Will anti-anxiety medication (like Versed) be given beforehand?
- ↳ When can I see my child after surgery?



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR TEAM (CONTINUED)

For Child Life:

- Is a Child Life Specialist available before and on the day of surgery?
- Can we schedule a pre-operative tour?
- What comfort items are allowed in pre-op and recovery?
- Are there social stories specific to this hospital?



When calling ahead, ask to speak with a nurse — not a scheduler — for the most accurate answers.



CHILD LIFE SERVICES

***FREE access to the SupportSpot app
for Hope for HIE families!***

*If you cannot access the app, please connect with all of our child life resources at
HIE.SUPPORT*



tinyurl.com/CLOCforIOS



tinyurl.com/CLOCforAndroid



1

**Sign up as a
Parent**

2

**Choose Facility:
Hope for HIE**

3

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048325**