

## Anesthesia in the GI Suite

Traditionally, colonoscopies and upper endoscopies have been performed in the Gastroenterology Suite with "conscious sedation" administered and supervised by the attending gastroenterologist. However, more and more frequently, both patients and GI doctors are requesting anesthesia services for these procedures. The reasons for these requests are varied, but ultimately come down to patient safety and comfort during the procedure.

To attain maximal patient comfort while maintaining safety, anesthesia is administered by a member of the anesthesia care team with close monitoring and oxygen supplementation. Typically, deep sedation and/or general anesthesia is attained with an ultra short acting medicine called propofol, used either alone, or in combination with two other medicines called midazolam (for additional sedation) and fentanyl (for discomfort). Propofol is given continuously via intravenous infusion and stopped at the end of the procedure. Usually, patients are alert and awake within 5 minutes or so after the procedure, anxious for their first food of the day, and ready to go home shortly after that. Side effects from the medications are rare, and most patients will insist on this type of anesthesia, should they need a repeat procedure in the future.

While there is an additional charge for anesthesia services, insurance will apply in almost all cases. Should you have any further questions or concerns regarding the provision of anesthesia or billing issues, please feel free to contact the Dominion Anesthesia Office Secretary at 703-558-6173.