

Anesthesiologists stress the importance of giving a complete medical history, as many things about a patient can affect the way his or her body reacts to anesthetic drugs.

ASA offers the following “Anesthesia & Me”® checklist to help you organize the information you should know about yourself and your loved ones in case surgery is needed.

Your anesthesiologist will also want to know when you have last eaten or had something to drink, whether you are pregnant, and a number of other things. This checklist will not replace a health history interview or the personal interaction between your doctor and you. It will provide a way to document vital information and keep it handy. In this way, whether your surgery is planned or unexpected, your physicians will have important information that will enable them to provide optimal care for you.

Anesthesiologists provide or participate in more than 90 percent of the anesthetics administered in the U.S. In the operating room, they are responsible for the medical management and anesthetic care of the patient throughout the duration of the surgery. They also medically evaluate the patient before surgery, supervise care afterward, and medically discharge the patient from the recovery unit.



These physicians have the education, skills and training necessary to carefully match the anesthetic needs of each patient to that patient’s medical condition, responses to anesthesia and the requirements of the surgery.

The role of the anesthesiologist in the operating room is to: 1) provide continual medical assessment of the patient; 2) monitor and control the patient’s vital life functions -- heart rate and rhythm, breathing, blood pressure, body temperature and body fluid balance; and 3) control the patient’s pain and level of unconsciousness to make conditions ideal for a safe and successful surgery. He or she may also be supervising one or more anesthesia residents (physicians in training). Anesthesiologists may also be medically directing anesthesiologist assistants or nurse anesthetists, who are trained in many of the technical aspects of anesthesia delivery, but not the medical aspects of anesthesia care.

Fill out the following health survey, date it and place it in your wallet. It just might save your life.

Date:

- A** **Allergies:** (reactions to food [such as eggs or shellfish], medicines, latex, etc.) _____
- N** **Neurological conditions:** (such as epilepsy, stroke)?
- E** **Esophageal conditions:** (reflux, chronic heartburn)?
- S** **Stomach problems:** (ulcers or eating disorders)?
- T** **Teeth:** (any loose teeth, dentures, bridgework)?
- H** **Heart disease:** (heart attack, angina or chest pain, high blood pressure, or family history of any of these)? _____
- E** **Emphysema, asthma, apnea:** (or other lung or breathing problem)?
- S** **Surgeries in the past and any problems with anesthesia?:** (Including any history of a family member having problems with anesthesia)
- I** **Immune system:** (deficiencies, hepatitis, immunizations) or inadequate clotting (excessive bleeding)?
- A** **Arthritis:** (or other conditions that restrict movement)?
- &**
- M** **Medications:** (prescription and over-the-counter drugs? Herbs or supplements?) _____
- E** **Endocrine system disorders:** (like diabetes, thyroid conditions)?