

ANAESTHESIA FOR ORAL SURGERY

This patient advisory is intended to provide you with general information. It is not a substitute for advice from your anaesthetist. You are encouraged to discuss the benefits and risks of anaesthesia with your anaesthetist. This is an abridged version of the ASA patient education pamphlet: Anaesthesia for Oral Surgery – a guide for patients. The complete pamphlet may be obtained from your anaesthetist.

Surgery performed within the mouth is known as oral surgery. Complex oral procedures often require intravenous sedation or general anaesthesia. These procedures include:

- removal of severely impacted teeth (especially wisdom teeth)
- exposure of partially erupted teeth
- dental implants
- operations on the bones of the jaws.

As the procedures are usually fairly brief, most patients go home after a few hours.

Young children having an oral procedure may need to have general anaesthesia. General anaesthesia can greatly reduce anxiety in children.

Before the sedation or anaesthetic

You may be asked to complete a questionnaire before your procedure because your anaesthetist needs to know about your health. Your anaesthetist will decide on the most appropriate anaesthetic for you.

You will be advised if you should stop taking any of your usual medicines and when you should stop eating and drinking before the operation. You may be given pre-operative medications.

Intravenous sedation

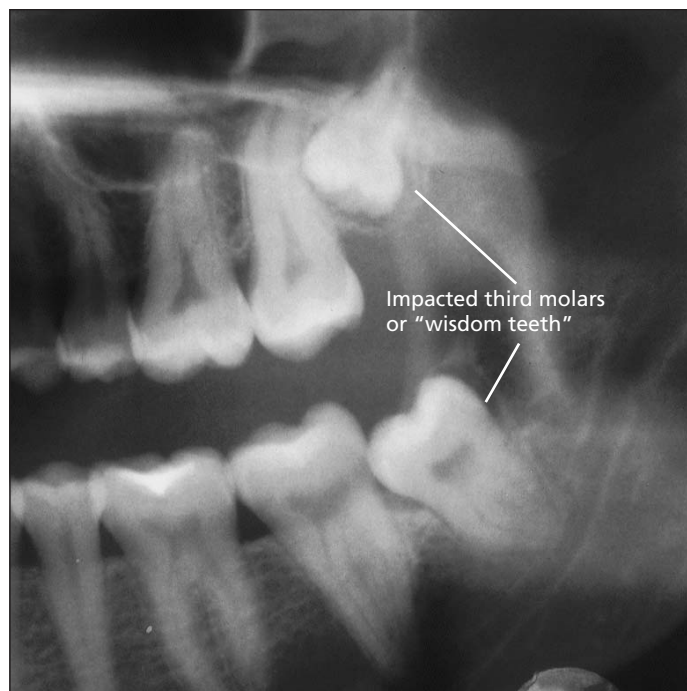
Small doses of anaesthetic drugs produce sedation. The patient has drowsiness, relief of anxiety and perhaps some pain relief.

General anaesthesia

General anaesthesia is a state of unconsciousness controlled by the anaesthetist. General anaesthesia for oral surgery requires the training, experience and skills of an anaesthetist to safely manage the patient.

The route of administration of the anaesthetic may be by inhalation or intravenous injection.

Your anaesthetist monitors your heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, other vital signs and depth of anaesthesia throughout the operation.



X-ray film of impacted third molars that require surgical extraction

Recovery from sedation and general anaesthesia

When the operation is completed, the patient is transferred to the recovery area to awaken fully. Patients are able to leave (with an accompanying person) once they have recovered sufficiently.

After complex procedures, the patient is transferred to a ward and remains in hospital overnight or longer.

The patient can usually eat and drink small amounts within several hours after most types of surgery.

Pain relief after surgery

Postoperative pain is often relieved by:

- local anaesthetic injected during the procedure
- medicines such as paracetamol (oral or suppositories), or paracetamol and codeine mixtures, or non-steroidal pain killers (for example, ibuprofen and related medicines).

Possible risks and complications

Modern anaesthesia is safe but does have risks of side effects and complications. If you are concerned about risks, please discuss this with your anaesthetist.

Although uncommon, complications are possible. These are more fully outlined in the complete ASA patient education pamphlet on oral surgery and should be discussed with your anaesthetist. ©