

Types of Anesthesia

Full Comparison Table



Category	Local Anesthesia	Regional Anesthesia	Sedation	General Anesthesia
 Brief Description	Numbing medication injected directly into a small area	Medication that blocks pain in an area of the body	Light to moderate sedation that helps you relax and feel drowsy	A controlled state of unconsciousness during the procedure
 When It's Used	Dental procedures, minor skin surgery, wound repair, skin biopsies, and minor stitches	Childbirth (epidural), leg/foot surgery, arm/hand surgery, cesarean sections	Colonoscopy, dental work, minor surgical procedures, endoscopy, shorter procedures	Major surgeries (heart, abdomen, joints, spine), longer and complex procedures
 How You'll Feel	The area will feel numb and tingly. You may feel pressure or vibration but no pain	The numbed area will feel heavy and tingly. You may feel pressure, but no pain	Sleepy and relaxed. You may respond to commands and be aware of your surroundings	Asleep before the procedure and wake up when it's finished. Most patients don't remember the procedure
 Breathing Support	Normal breathing on your own, with monitoring as needed	Breathing on your own, with monitoring and support as needed	Breathing on your own, with monitoring and support as needed	A breathing tube and ventilator are needed

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 What the CRNA Is Checking	Heart rate and blood pressure may be monitored depending on the procedure	Heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels, and the blocked area	Heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels, breathing rate and depth, sedation level	Heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels, carbon dioxide levels, body temperature, breathing depth
 Anesthesia Effects	Only the treatment area is affected. You stay alert and aware. Minimal side effects	Larger area is numbed effectively. You stay alert. Good pain control	Relaxed and comfortable. Faster recovery, no breathing tube, fewer side effects, ideal for shorter procedures	Complete unconsciousness with no awareness or memory of the procedure. Enables safe surgery on major areas
 Possible Risks & Side Effects	Allergic reactions to numbing medication (rare), temporary numbness lasting hours, infection	Low blood pressure, breathing changes, temporary numbness, infection, headache, nerve damage	Slow breathing, low blood pressure, nausea, confusion, allergic reactions, and rare serious complications	Nausea, vomiting, sore throat, drowsiness, confusion, headache, rare serious reactions
 Recovery Time	Recovery is usually quick. Numbness begins to wear off in 1-4 hours	Numbness may last 4-24 hours depending on type and location. May feel effects for up to 24 hours	30 minutes to 2 hrs. in recovery room, quicker recovery than most, may feel effects for up to 24 hours	1-2 hours in recovery room before discharge, may require stay in hospital, may feel effects for up to 24 hours

