

# **General Anesthesia Education**

Anesthesia is a treatment that uses medicines called anesthetics that make you sleepy and prevent you from feeling discomfort during a procedure or surgery. There are different types of anesthesia-general, local, and procedural/conscious sedation. This education guide will discuss general anesthesia. At Oklahoma Heart Hospital (OHH), the type of anesthesia you receive varies based on the type of procedure or surgery you are having, your overall health, and what you and your physician feel is best for you. You will not be able to drive yourself home when given anesthesia.

## **General Anesthesia**

General or deep anesthesia uses a combination of intravenous (IV) medicines and inhaled gasses to put you in a sleep like state, so you do not feel any pain. You are unconscious during general anesthesia. An anesthesiologist is a specially trained doctor that will monitor your body's vital functions and breathing while you are under general anesthesia.

It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions on avoiding food and drink before surgery. This is for your safety since anesthesia can relax the muscles in your digestive tract and airway. Once you are asleep, the anesthesiologist may insert an endotracheal tube into your mouth and down into your airway to protect your lungs from fluids. This helps breathe for you while you are under general anesthesia. Another option to help manage your breathing is a laryngeal airway mask. Which option is best for you will be based on the type of surgery or procedure you are having along with your overall health.

## **Side Effects of General Anesthesia**

When your surgery is finished, the anesthesiologist will reverse the medications so you can wake up. You will likely feel groggy and may be a little confused when you first wake up. Common side effects with anesthesia are:

- Nausea
- Itching
- Dry mouth
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Shivering
- Mild hoarseness
- Sleepiness