

What is a Pediatric Anesthesiologist?

If your child has an illness, injury, or disease that requires surgery, a *Pediatric Anesthesiologist* has the experience and qualifications to assist in the treatment and to help ensure a successful surgery for your child.

A pediatric anesthesiologist is a fully trained anesthesiologist who has completed at least 1 year of specialized training in anesthesia care of infants and children. Most pediatric surgeons deliver care to children in the operating room along with a pediatric anesthesiologist. Many children who need surgery have very complex medical problems that affect many parts of the body. The pediatric anesthesiologist is best qualified to evaluate these complex problems and plan a safe anesthetic for each child. Through special training and experience, pediatric anesthesiologists provide the safest care for infants and children undergoing anesthesia.

What kind of training do pediatric anesthesiologists have?

Pediatric anesthesiologists are physicians who have had

- At least 4 years of medical school
- One year of internship and 3 years of residency in anesthesiology
- Additional specialty training in pediatric anesthesiology
- Certification from the American Board of Anesthesiologists

Pediatric anesthesiologists treat children from the newborn period through the teenage years. They choose to make pediatric care the core of their medical practice, and the unique nature of medical and surgical care of children is learned from advanced training and experience in practice.

What types of treatments do pediatric anesthesiologists provide?

Pediatric anesthesiologists are responsible for the general anesthesia, sedation, and pain management needs of infants and children. Pediatric anesthesiologists generally provide the following services:

- Evaluation of complex medical problems in infants and children when surgery is needed
- Planning and care for before and after surgery
- A nonthreatening environment for children in the operating room
- Pain control, if needed after surgery, either with intravenous (IV) medications or other anesthetic techniques
- Anesthesia and sedation for many procedures out of the operating room such as MRI, CT scan, and radiation therapy.

Where can I find a pediatric anesthesiologist?

Pediatric anesthesiologists practice in a variety of medical institutions including children's hospitals, university medical centers, and large community hospitals.

Pediatric anesthesiologists — the best care for children

Children are not just small adults. They cannot always say what is bothering them. They cannot always answer medical questions, and are not always able to be patient and cooperative during a medical examination. Pediatric anesthesiologists know how to examine and treat children in a way that makes them relaxed and cooperative. In addition, pediatric anesthesiologists use equipment and facilities specifically designed for children. Most pediatric anesthesiology offices are arranged and decorated with children in mind. This includes the examination rooms and waiting rooms, which may have toys and reading materials for children. This helps create a comfortable and nonthreatening environment for your child.

If your pediatrician suggests that your child see a pediatric anesthesiologist, you can be assured that he or she has the widest range of treatment options, the most extensive and complete training, and the greatest expertise in dealing with children and their anesthesiology needs.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

From your doctor

American Academy
of Pediatrics



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