Types of Surgical Anesthesia

Spinal Anesthesia

Spinal anesthesia is injected using a much smaller needle, directly into the cerebrospinal fluid that surrounds the spinal cord. The area where the needle will be inserted is first numbed with a local anesthetic. Then the needle is guided into the spinal canal, and the anesthetic is injected. This is usually done without the use of a catheter. Spinal anesthesia numbs the body below and sometimes above the site of the injection. The person may not be able to move his or her legs until the anesthetic wears off.

Spinal anesthesia is usually combined with other medicines that make you relaxed or sleepy (sedatives) or relieve pain (analgesics). These other medicines are often given through a vein (intravenously, IV). Or they may be injected into the epidural space along with the local anesthetic.

General Anesthesia

General anesthesia is a combination of medicines that you inhale or receive through a needle in a vein to cause you to become unconscious. It affects your whole body. Under anesthesia, you should be completely unaware and not feel pain during the surgery or procedure. General anesthesia also causes forgetfulness (amnesia) and relaxation of the muscles throughout your body. General anesthesia is commonly begun (induced) with intravenous (IV) anesthetics. But inhaled anesthetics also may be used. After you are unconscious, anesthesia may be maintained with an inhaled anesthetic alone, with a combination of intravenous anesthetics, or a combination of inhaled and intravenous anesthetics.

As you begin to awaken from general anesthesia, you may experience some confusion, disorientation, or difficulty thinking clearly. This is normal. It may take some time before the effects of the anesthesia are completely gone.

Adductor Canal Block

The Adductor Canal block is a block of the femoral nerve, further down the thigh to preserve muscle function. The benefit of the block is management of pain post-operatively, early ambulation and safer rehab.

Scalene Block

An Interscalene block is a form of regional anesthesia used in conjunction with general anesthesia for surgeries of the shoulder and upper arm. Simply stated, an Interscalene block will numb your shoulder and arm before surgery so that your brain will not receive any pain signals during and immediately after surgery.

Local Anesthesia

Local anesthesia uses medicine to block sensations of pain from a specific area of the body. Local anesthetics are usually given by injection into the body area that needs to be anesthetized. They are not injected into the bloodstream (intravenous, IV). Local anesthetics may be given with other medicines that make you relaxed or sleepy (sedatives). These other medicines are often given by IV.

Local anesthesia is most often used when:

- A minor procedure doesn't require general or regional anesthesia.
- A surgery can be done in a short time and you will go home soon after.
- A surgery does not require unconsciousness or extreme muscle relaxation