

Let them know they will be getting anesthesia 2-3 days prior, and remind them the morning of the appointment. Talk about the concrete steps for the day and what they will experience:

- where you are going, how you are getting there
- what they can play in the waiting room, what a coping plan is
- very simply what will happen (see the doctor, get sleep medicine, wake up)
- what will happen following the event (go home to rest, go pick up sibling from school, watch movie?)

Using play or a book to initiate preparation for anesthesia allows for repetition of the information, and helps them to understand the routine of the beginning, middle and end for experience. You can also make a visual story board showing the steps of the day to have hanging in your home to give reminders of what to expect.

When kids ask...

What is anesthesia?

Medicine that make your body go to sleep while the doctors help your body

- Helps your whole body to go to sleep so you don't feel anything. **see surgery
- Your body will go to sleep when the doctors start giving you the medicine and will wake up when the doctors stop giving you the medicine.
- This sleep is different from when you go to sleep at night.

How does it work?

One doctor's only job is to be in charge of the sleeping medicine - this is the anesthesiologist

How do you get the sleeping medicine? **Check with medical team ahead of time

- through a mask that goes over your nose and mouth, and you breathe in the medicine.
- or through an IV - a bendy straw placed under your skin to give your body medicine. **see IV placement

"The anesthesiologist (doctor in charge of the sleeping medicine) knows just how much medicine to give you to keep your body asleep and not feeling anything.

Remember, when the other doctors are done helping your body, the anesthesiologist will stop giving you the medicine and you will wake up."

What do I do before?

"You can't eat or drink anything before surgery because sometimes the medicine they give you that makes you sleep can make your tummy hurt if you eat or drink before."

Let's think of a plan for you to think about as your body is going to sleep:

- What do you want to think about? (favorite story/book)
- What do you want to bring with you to the doctors/hospital? (favorite stuffed animal, blanket, backpack of distraction toys, pillow)

What happens after I wake up?

You might feel super sleepy for a while, kind of how it feels when you wake up super super early in the morning.

"Mom/Dad/Caregiver will be there when you wake up and a nurse will be there to take care of you and to keep you safe."

"Your job when your body wakes up is to let us know if you are feeling anything uncomfortable anywhere on your body."

Check with your medical team, but sometimes it can be helpful to share a positive experience to look forward too:

- Eat a popsicle when they wake up/go home