

## Anesthesia

A child wonders what the first day of school will be like. Someone is about to start a new job. A young couple is about to be married.

Each of these situations is a classic anxiety producer. What they have in common is that each involves the unknown. And that's what anxiety is: the fear of a specific upcoming event that, in all likelihood, you've never before experienced.

### **The Less You Worry, the Easier it Will Be**

An upcoming visit to an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon is another potential anxiety producer. In this case, the patient is typically most concerned about possible pain—whether the procedure is going to hurt.

The good news is that whether your procedure requires local or intravenous anesthesia, today's technology makes it possible to perform complex surgery in the oral and maxillofacial surgery office with little or no discomfort for the patient. Knowing this should start to reduce your level of anxiety.

### **Extensive Training and Experience in the Control of Pain and Anxiety**

The ability to provide patients with safe, effective outpatient anesthesia has distinguished the specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery since its earliest days. As the surgical specialists of the dental profession, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons are trained in all aspects of anesthesia administration. Following dental school, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons complete at least four years of training in a hospital-based surgical residency program alongside



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medical residents in general surgery, anesthesia and other specialties. During this time, OMS residents must complete a rotation on the medical anesthesiology service, during which they become competent in evaluating patients for anesthesia, delivering the anesthetic and monitoring post-anesthetic patients.

As a result of this extensive training, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons are well-prepared to identify, diagnose and assess the source of pain and anxiety within the scope of their discipline, and to appropriately administer local anesthesia, all forms of sedation and general anesthesia. Further, they are experienced in airway management, endotracheal intubation, establishing and maintaining intravenous lines, and managing complications and emergencies that may arise during the administration of anesthesia.

The administration of anesthesia in the oral and maxillofacial surgery office has an enviable safety record. Insurance statistics<sup>1</sup> indicate the frequency of office-related mortality and morbidity is one<sup>1</sup> incident in 705,000 anesthetics administered over a 16-year period.

### **Putting Your Mind at Ease**

The best way to reduce anxiety is to make certain you know what to expect during and after surgery. As with most anxiety-producing situations, the more you know, the less you have to be anxious about. Prior to surgery, your Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon will review with you the type of anesthetic to be used, as well as the way you're likely to feel during and after the operation. This is the time to discuss any concerns you may have about any facet of the operation.

During surgery, one or more of the following may be used to control your pain and anxiety: local anesthesia, nitrous oxide-oxygen, intravenous sedation and general anesthesia. Commonly, patients describe their feelings during surgery as comfortable and surprisingly pleasant.

After surgery, you may be prescribed a medication to make you as comfortable as possible when you get home.