

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Anesthesiologist</b> <b>Vicebar s.r.o.</b> <b>www.vicebar.cz</b> <a href="mailto:robert.sachl@vfn.cz">robert.sachl@vfn.cz</a> +420 733 756 509</p>	
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### **Anesthesia for a dental examination**

This document applies to healthcare for otherwise healthy children (2 and up) and adults who do not cooperate or require **any type of anesthesia** (general anesthesia, regional anesthesia, analgosedation, anesthesia monitoring) during a dental procedure.

It is absolutely necessary for clients to **eat and drink nothing for four hours** before the procedure and administration of anesthesia. Otherwise clients run the risk of inhaling the contents of the stomach and needing medical intervention or transport to the hospital. **Parents are responsible for ensuring the child arrives on an empty stomach.** The complications arising from inhaling the contents of the stomach are immediately life-threatening.

Adults and children aged 2 and up can undergo dental examinations under **analgosedation**. This is a type of anesthesia in which clients receive the amount of anesthesia (substances that induce sleep and remove awareness of pain) that maintains spontaneous breathing and a number of other protective reflexes. The patient may not remember anything at the end of the procedure, but the dental examination process can sometimes be unpredictable. For this reason analgosedation is used in dental examinations of short duration.

During **general anesthesia** the child falls asleep after several breaths of anesthetic gas, then the IV cannula is inserted and the medication is administered intravenously and/or through inhalation of an anesthetic mixture. Adults or cooperative patients tolerate the IV insertion and then receive anesthesia intravenously. The patient is in a deep sleep and does not remember the procedure. Vital signs are monitored by the anesthesia team. This is the safest type of anesthesia for procedures in the dentist's chair that require anesthesia. The examination is comfortable for the patient, dentist and worried parent.

Vital signs are monitored during every procedure. The anesthesia wears off in a matter of minutes and the patient continues sleeping until ready to wake up. You should anticipate one hour of quiet sleep after anesthesia. The IV cannula, if used, is removed from the arm before the patient is fully awake.

The client can be released into an accompanying person's care to recover at home between 30 minutes and two hours after the examination ends. It takes three to six hours for the anesthesia to wear off fully, so patients should be **watched closely** during that time! Children cannot go to school or nursery on the same day as receiving anesthesia! Children sometimes cry when waking up from anesthesia, which is a result of changes in perception of their surroundings and is not a sign of pain or fear!

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU NEED ANY CLARIFICATION.