

When Seconds Count...

Physician Anesthesiologists Save Lives.®

Physician anesthesiologists are highly trained medical experts who evaluate, monitor and care for patients before, during and after surgery as well as treat chronic pain, medical emergencies and complications.



Take Action. Protect Patients.

The facts:

- Nurse anesthetists are trained to administer anesthesia, but do not have the medical education or clinical training to make critical decisions during surgery.
- Patient -centered, physician-led anesthesia care is critical and quality medical care is a paramount criteria in all hospitals and health care settings. Quality and safe patient care must be maintained regardless of the socio economic status of the patients served by hospitals or ambulatory surgery centers.
- The American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA)—the educational, research and scientific society representing the medical specialty—strongly advocates for the active participation and immediate physical availability of at least one physician anesthesiologist for every four nurses before, during and after simultaneous or overlapping surgeries and medical procedures involving anesthesia.
- This patient-centered model requires the training and expertise of a physician anesthesiologist to provide diagnostic and treatment services while nurse anesthetists and nonphysicians on the care team provide nursing and other essential services.
- Access is an important health care issue and patients in rural areas across America deserve the same standard of care as every other patient. In the rare case a physician anesthesiologist is not available to deliver anesthesia and/or lead the care team, a surgeon or another qualified physician should supervise anesthesia care.
- Allowing nurses to administer anesthesia without physician supervision does not save patients or taxpayers money. Medicare, Medicaid and most third-party insurers pay the same fees for anesthesia whether it is administered by a nurse anesthetist or physician anesthesiologist.
- Eliminating the physician anesthesiologist can actually cost more, as other physicians may be needed to consult or provide the services a physician anesthesiologist would: assessing pre-existing conditions or handling emergencies and other medical issues before, during and after medical procedures.
- A *New England Journal of Medicine* review article cites that pre-surgical assessment and preparation of patients for surgery by physician anesthesiologists significantly reduces unnecessary testing and preventable cancellations of surgery. Physician anesthesiologists reduced medical consultation requests by 75 percent, the cancellation of operations for medical reasons by 88 percent and the cost of laboratory tests by 59 percent.

