

Providing High Quality Cardiac Anesthesia Services



At Pikes Peak Anesthesia Associates, our goal is to ensure your safety and maximize your comfort while you receive the care your heart needs during heart surgery. We hope that knowing you will be cared for by a board certified (or eligible) anesthesiologist will help put you at ease as you prepare for your procedure. With Pikes Peak Anesthesia, you will always be cared for, one-on-one, by a physician anesthesiologist. All of the doctors selected to be part of our cardiac anesthesia team graduated from medical school, completed an accredited residency program in anesthesiology, obtained board certification in anesthesiology and are credentialed in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography. The cardiac anesthesia team has collaborated with the surgeons of Cardiac & Thoracic Surgery Associates (CTSA) to establish the Penrose-St Francis Heart Program as the busiest, most successful cardiac program in the state.

Introduction to Pikes Peak Anesthesia Associates

Pikes Peak Anesthesia Associates (PPAA) is one of the largest and most respected independent anesthesia groups in Colorado. Our group consists of over 40 board certified (or eligible) anesthesiologists dedicated to the highest levels of care for our patients. Our specialist doctors provide the full range of medical service for adult and pediatric surgery, acute trauma, labor and delivery, cardiology procedures, gastroenterology procedures, radiology procedures and the diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic pain. Pikes Peak Anesthesia has provided high quality, safe, efficient, cost-effective and cutting-edge anesthesia services to the Pikes Peak area for decades.

Our physicians are committed to helping you have the best possible experience. We will meet with you individually to make sure you understand everything about your care before the procedure, provide you with all available options and alternatives, tailor the anesthetic to your specific needs and ensure that you receive the safest possible treatment.

The Cardiac Anesthesia Process

On the day of your procedure, you will meet your cardiac anesthesiologist. He or she will discuss with you important aspects of your health. In addition, your anesthesiologist will explain to you the anesthetic care plan, describe what to expect before and after your procedure, and address any concerns you may have. Your cardiac anesthesiologist will also determine whether you are a candidate to have a simple spinal morphine pain relieving injection prior to your operation that will not only help control the amount of pain when you wake up, but also will greatly reduce the total amount of pain medications needed after your surgery, thus minimize undesirable side effects from them.

After you have spoken with your anesthesiologist, you will meet the nurse who will help you to the operating room (OR). Once in the operating room, you will meet several additional members of the heart team including additional nurses and other OR staff who will help care for you during your procedure. They will help you move from the gurney on which you entered to the bed located in the operating room. The nurses will then apply several monitors including a blood pressure cuff, small stickers to monitor your heart rhythm and additional stickers on your finger and forehead to monitor your oxygen levels. During this time, you may be given medication in your intravenous (IV) that will help you relax and often forget this portion of the experience. Prior to going completely off to sleep, your anesthesiologist will place an additional monitor called an arterial line typically at your wrist, which allows for continuous monitoring of your blood pressure. It is similar to an IV, except that it is placed in an artery rather than a vein. This is done by first thoroughly numbing the area with local anesthetic (similar to Novocain) so that following an initial pinch you should not experience discomfort.

At this point, your anesthesiologist will begin to give you oxygen to breath. You will then receive medication in your IV that will help you gently drift off to sleep. (continued on Page 2)

The Cardiac Anesthesia Process (continued)

After you are completely asleep, a small breathing tube will be placed through your mouth and into your airway. The breathing tube allows your anesthesiologist to ensure you receive adequate oxygen and allows for the administration of medication (i.e. anesthetic gas) to ensure you are asleep during your procedure.

Following the surgery, you will most likely go to the intensive care unit (ICU) with this breathing tube in place. You will continue to receive medication for comfort until the breathing tube can safely be removed, which occurs when your heart and lungs regain adequate strength.

Additionally, after you are asleep and prior to the surgery, your anesthesiologist will place a special IV (known as a central line) typically in the vein just above your collar bone. Placing this IV is necessary as those in the veins of the arm are not always reliable in delivering the medications your heart may need during and after surgery. This IV should not be painful, although it may be a bit annoying due to its location. While you are sleeping, your anesthesiologist will also likely assist your surgeon by performing an ultrasound (also known as a transesophageal echocardiogram) of your heart for which he or she has undergone specialized training and received certification to perform and interpret.

At the conclusion of the procedure, your anesthesiologist will go with you to the intensive care unit. He or she will stay with you in the ICU for a time to ensure your heart and lung function is stable. Your anesthesiologist will also communicate important information about your health status to the ICU team to assist them in caring for you during your hospital stay.



Continuously Improving

We are passionate about continually improving the way we care for our patients. In addition to ongoing individual efforts to provide the latest in quality anesthesia care, our team of cardiac anesthesiologists regularly meets and collaborates with the surgeons of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery Associates so that together we can provide you with the safest and most advanced perioperative care possible.

Please note that charges for your anesthesia services will come separately from your hospital bill. For billing questions, call: 844-900-7722. You may also make payments at our website:

www.ppaa.com

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