

Anaesthesia for Eye Surgery

Eye surgery can be performed under an eye block, topical anaesthesia, or general anaesthesia. The choice of anaesthesia depends on the patient, type of surgery and the preference of the eye surgeon and patient.

Topical anaesthesia

Topical anaesthesia is commonly used in patients who are unable to have an eye block or in rare cases where the eye block fails to provide adequate anaesthesia and analgesia.

Cataract surgery can be performed under topical anaesthesia using local anaesthetic eye drops, although this does not result in the same surgical operating conditions that can be achieved with an eye block. When supplemented with sedation similar operating conditions can be achieved with topical.

Sedation

Conscious sedation reduces the patient's level of consciousness but allows them to respond to verbal commands or light touch so that a specialist can perform a procedure. A variety of medications and techniques are used for procedural sedation and/or pain relief. Common medications include benzodiazepines, such as midazolam, which act on the brain and the nervous system to cause sedation, and opioids, such as fentanyl, which decrease the patient's perception of pain to provide pain relief.

Local Anaesthesia

Local anaesthesia involves injecting local anaesthetic into the tissues near the surgical site. Local anaesthesia may be used alone or in combination with sedation or general anaesthesia. This depends on the size of the surgery and the time it will take, and the preferences of the patient. Eyelid correction, Pterygium etc can be done under local supplemented with sedation.

General anaesthesia

General anaesthesia involves the patient being put into a medication-induced state which, when deep enough, means that the patient will not respond to pain and includes changes in breathing and circulation. Under general anaesthetic, a patient is in a state of carefully controlled unconsciousness. GA is used in squint correction, Pterygium or patients not suitable for sedation and local. I will discuss with you the best and safest option that suits you and the procedure on the day of surgery.

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