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**Introduction**

Your surgeon has requested my presence as your anaesthetist for your upcoming procedure. Anaesthetists are medical specialists with expertise in assisting patients through their surgical experience, dealing with critically unwell patients and managing acute pain.

I spent 7 years at the University of Sydney to obtain my medical degree and 9 years training in New South Wales Hospitals. The last 5 of these years were spent in anaesthetic training at Royal North Shore Hospital. As a major tertiary referral hospital, I have extensive experience in complex general and orthopaedic surgery, vascular surgery, obstetrics, paediatrics, ENT and eye surgery, neurosurgery, plastic surgery and interventional radiological procedures. My areas of interest outside of clinical practice include medical education and quality assurance.

I am a member of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists and currently work at several major hospitals within Sydney. I am interested in sport, history and politics. I love to travel, and I play regular team basketball and touch football.

**Your anaesthetic**

Before your operation I will discuss the anaesthetic options available. There are many ways that you can be made comfortable for your procedure including: sedation (a calm state), general anaesthesia (an unconscious state), local or regional anaesthesia (where a part of the body is numbed), or a combination of these.

**Anaesthetic fees**

Your anaesthetic fees are calculated in accordance with guidelines from the Australian Medical Association and the Australian Society of Anaesthetists. The fee is determined by the duration and difficulty of your anaesthetic care. Your health fund may fully or partially cover this fee. In the case of partial coverage, you will be required to pay the difference which is known as an out-of-pocket cost.

**Estimate on out-of-pocket fees**

For patients who have an out-of-pocket cost my fee range is \$0 - \$500. On average, most insured patients have an out-of-pocket fee of \$300-\$400. These fees are lower than those recommended by both the Australian Medical Association and Australian Society of Anaesthetists.

## **Preoperative instructions**

### Fasting

- No food or drink for 6 hours prior to your arrival at hospital
- You may drink **water only** up until 2 hours prior to your arrival at hospital
- The presence of food/drink in your stomach is dangerous during your operation

### Smoking

- Smoking is associated with increased risk around the time of your operation
- Increased respiratory problems, impaired wound healing and increased risk of infections are some of these risks
- Ceasing smoking 4 weeks before your operation can reduce these risks
- Never smoke within 24 hours of your operation

### Medication

- Please inform your surgeon about any diabetic or blood thinning medications you are taking
- All other regular medications should be continued
- Morning medications can be taken with a sip of water

## **Postoperative advice**

A responsible adult should monitor you for 24 hours.

You should not drive or sign important documents for 24 hours.

Most patients require simple analgesia with paracetamol and anti-inflammatories for 2-5 days, and occasionally more powerful pain-relieving medications for 1-2 days.

If there is a need for a more intensive pain management plan, it will be thoroughly explained to you

## **Risks associated with anaesthesia**

Anaesthesia is very safe, and the standard of care in Australia is world leading. However, there remain risks associated with surgery and anaesthesia. These risks increase with age, complexity of surgery and the presence/severity of other medical problems.

Common side effects include a sore throat, nausea and vomiting, some discomfort or pain, lethargy and tiredness. Strong pain-relieving medications frequently cause drowsiness, itch, nausea and constipation.

Serious complications very rarely occur including respiratory and airway problems, abnormal heart rhythms, a heart attack, injuries to eyes or teeth, nerve injuries, awareness and death.

## **Enquiries**

If you have any questions regarding your anaesthetic or fees, please contact me. Most people are relieved to have their surgical problems fixed and have an overall positive experience. I will also be happy to discuss any concerns when we meet in person. I look forward to meeting you – Dr Sean Duncan.