

Boston Eye Surgery & Laser Center Anesthesia and Eye Surgery

There are various types of anesthesia used in eye surgery. Your surgeon will choose the most appropriate type of anesthesia based on your surgical procedure, surgical conditions, and his or her preference. The following are the most common types of anesthesia used in eye surgery:

Topical Anesthesia: A nurse will instill eye drops that will numb your eye and a member of the anesthesia team, either an anesthesiologist or a certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA), will start an intravenous (IV) in your arm or hand to administer light sedation to help you feel comfortable and relaxed during the surgery.

Eye Block Anesthesia (Retrobulbar or Peribulbar): A member of the anesthesia team will start an IV in your arm or hand. Through this the anesthesia provider will administer medication to make you comfortable for the procedure. Then the anesthesiologist will perform an injection of local anesthetic behind and around the eye to temporarily anesthetize and immobilize it for your surgery.

Local Anesthesia: This form of anesthesia is commonly used for eyelid surgery. A member of the anesthesia team will start an (IV) in your arm or hand to administer light sedation. Once you are relaxed, your surgeon will inject an anesthetic to numb the surgical site.

Risks of Anesthesia

Every type of anesthesia has associated risks, therefore none of the anesthesia procedures summarized above are risk free.

Each anesthesia provider at the surgery centers who administer eye blocks has received extensive training and has performed thousands of eye blocks. Over the cumulative years of their practice, they have experienced complication rates that are extremely low compared to national standards. The surgeons that utilize the surgery centers have the upmost confidence in the abilities of the anesthesia providers to provide safe and comfortable anesthesia care.

The surgery centers take the risks of anesthesia very seriously. We encourage you to discuss your treatment plan with your surgeon and ask any questions you may have regarding anesthesia. For more detailed information regarding the risk and benefits of the different types of anesthesia used for eye surgery please reference the Betsy Lehman Center's website: www.betsylehmancenterma.gov