

Comparison of Anesthesiologist Assistants and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists

	ANESTHESIOLOGIST ASSISTANTS (AAs)	CERTIFIED REGISTERED NURSE ANESTHETISTS (CRNAs)
Description of Practice	An AA is a health professional qualified by advanced education and clinical training to work under the direction of a licensed anesthesiologist to develop and implement anesthesia care plans.	CRNAs may work under the medical direction of an anesthesiologist as part of the Anesthesia Care Team, or they may work under the supervision of a surgeon, dentist or independently licensed practitioner legally authorized to deliver anesthesia services delineated in the rules and regulations written in accordance with the various state laws.
Number of Providers	700 AAs are licensed in the states of AL, GA, KY, MO, NM, OH, SC, and VT. AAs practice under delegatory authority in DC and TX.	24,000 CRNAs in all states.
Training Programs	There are 2 programs in the United States within a School of Medicine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio • Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. 	85 programs in the United States within a school of nursing or schools of health science and other graduate programs.
Length of Program	2-3 years	2-3 years
Admission Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science degree • Pre-med curriculum (Biology, General and Organic Chemistry, Physics, Anatomy, and Mathematics) • GPA ~ 3.0 • GRE is required for admittance to Emory • MCAT is required for admittance to Case Western and recommended for admittance to Emory • —Previous patient care experience preferable 	Presently, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree or another appropriate baccalaureate degree HOWEVER , one-third of all practicing nurse anesthetists have not earned an undergraduate degree Science curriculum for general practice nurse GPA ~ 3.0 Licensure as a registered nurse Minimum one year of nursing experience in acute care setting
The Educational Program	Based on Masters degree model and co-directed by Board-certified anesthesiologists. Students are taught course work that enhances their basic science knowledge in: Physiology; Pharmacology; Anatomy; Biochemistry. * All are taught with special emphasis on major human physiologic systems.	The classroom curriculum emphasizes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physiology; • Pharmacology; • Biochemistry; • Chemistry; • Physics; • Pathophysiology.
Clinical Instruction	Students are educated extensively in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient monitoring; • Anesthesia delivery systems; • Life support systems; • Patient assessment; • Skills needed to provide compassionate quality care. 	Provides experience with a variety of anesthesia techniques and procedures for all types of surgery and obstetrics.
Degree Conferred upon Provider	Master of Science in Anesthesiology (Case Western Reserve University) or Master of Medical Science degree in Anesthesiology and Patient Monitoring Systems (Emory University).	As of 1998, Masters of Nursing in Anesthesia in nursing, allied health, or biological and clinical sciences.

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<i>National Certification Examination</i>	<p>The National Commission for the Certification of Anesthesiologist Assistant (NCCAA) and National Board of Medical Examiners developed a voluntary certification examination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who pass are designated AA-Certified (AA-C) and must submit to continuing medical education credits biennially to maintain their status • Continuing demonstration of qualification every 6 years 	<p>A nurse anesthetist may voluntarily take a certification examination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who pass become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)
<i>Role in the Medical Profession</i>	<p>For the role of anesthesiologists assistants, refer to ASA's Recommended Scope of Practice of Nurse Anesthetists and Anesthesiologist Assistants.</p>	<p>For the role of nurse anesthetists, refer to ASA's Recommended Scope of Practice of Nurse Anesthetists and Anesthesiologist Assistants.</p>
<i>Reimbursement for Services</i>	<p>3rd party reimbursement for services provided is recognized by insurers, along with federal and state programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.</p>	<p>3rd Party reimbursement for services provided is recognized by insurers, along with federal and state programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.</p>