

The Medical Necessity of Anesthesiology Services

American Society of Anesthesiologists' Position Statement

Approved by the Administrative Council June 4, 2006

There is no circumstance when it is considered acceptable for a person to experience emotional or psychological duress or untreated pain amenable to safe intervention while under a physician's care.

Anesthesiology is a discipline within the practice of medicine that involves the safeguarding and medical management of patients who are rendered unconscious and/or insensible to pain and emotional distress during surgical, obstetrical and other medical procedures.

The decision as to the medical necessity of anesthesiology services for a particular patient is a medical judgment that must consider all patient factors, procedure requirements, potential risks and benefits, requirements or preferences of the physician performing the surgery/procedure, and competencies of the involved practitioners.

The decision to perform a specific anesthetic technique should only be made by a physician trained in anesthesiology in conjunction with the patient and the physician performing the surgery/procedure.

The ASA does not support the determinations of medical necessity of anesthesiology services made independently by other organizations, such as healthcare specialty organizations or health insurance plans.

It is the position of the ASA that the delivery of anesthesia by an anesthesiologist for diagnostic or therapeutic surgical, obstetrical and medical procedures shall be appropriately reimbursed such as by the use of the recognized ASA RVG CPT methodology.