

Williams Syndrome & Anesthesia

A Family Guide for Sharing Important Information Before Sedation or Anesthesia

This handout is designed to help families communicate important medical information with the anesthesia team. It does not replace a medical evaluation by your physicians.

Why Is Williams Syndrome Different?

People with Williams syndrome have a higher risk of complications during sedation and anesthesia than the general population. Most anesthetics are completed safely, especially when the care team understands the individual's medical history and plans appropriately.

Important reference articles:

Matisoff AJ, Olivieri L, Schwartz JM, Deutsch N. Risk assessment and anesthetic management of patients with Williams syndrome: a comprehensive review.

Paediatr Anaesth. 2015 Dec;25(12):1207-15. doi: 10.1111/pan.12775. Epub 2015 Oct 12.

PMID: 26456018.

Collins Ii RT, Collins MG, Schmitz ML, Hamrick JT. Peri-procedural risk stratification and management of patients with Williams syndrome. Congenit Heart Dis. 2017 Mar;12(2):133-142. doi: 10.1111/chd.12447.

PMID: 28382779.

Important Information for the Anesthesia Team

Recent Cardiology Information

Date of last cardiology visit: _____

Date of last echocardiogram: _____

Current cardiologist: _____

Hospital/Center: _____

Previous Sedation or Anesthesia

Has your family member ever received sedation or anesthesia?

☐ Yes ☐ No



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If yes, were there any problems?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Difficult IV placement | ☐ Difficult to sedate |
| ☐ Low blood pressure | ☐ Slow heart rate |
| ☐ Difficulty waking up | ☐ Breathing problems |
| ☐ Required ICU admission | ☐ Other: _____ |

- Has the anesthesia team cared for patients with Williams syndrome before?
- Has my family member's cardiology history been reviewed?
- Have you collaborated with my family member's cardiologist?
- Is additional cardiac testing needed before anesthesia?
- If unexpected cardiac complications occur, what resources are available at this hospital?
- Will my family member recover in the PACU or require a higher level of monitoring?
- What symptoms should I watch for after going home?

Helpful Information to Share

Please tell the anesthesia team if:

- Your family member's activity level has changed recently.
- Your family member has had new chest pain, fainting, or dizziness.
- Your family member has been ill recently.
- There have been any medication changes.
- Your cardiologist has recommended a specific hospital or anesthesia team for procedures.

Remember

The safest anesthesia plan is individualized. The anesthesia team, cardiologist, surgeon, and family should work together to determine the best approach for each procedure.

If there are new cardiac symptoms before the procedure (such as chest pain, fainting, worsening exercise tolerance, or unexplained illness), notify your cardiologist and anesthesia team before anesthesia whenever possible.

This guide is intended to support communication between families and medical teams. It is not a substitute for individualized medical advice from your family member's physicians.



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