

## **Ten Things Patients Should Know and Questions Patients Should Ask**

### **FSA Anesthesia Awareness**

#### **Ten Things Patients Should Know About Patient Awareness Under General Anesthesia**

1. It is rare. Less than one in 1,000 surgeries and decreasing. When it does occur, it is often fleeting and not traumatic.
2. Those experiencing awareness usually don't feel pain. Some may feel pressure.
3. Awareness can range from brief, hazy recall to specific awareness. Dreams or perception of surroundings does not necessarily represent awareness.
4. Awareness can occur in high-risk surgeries in which the patient's condition may not allow for a deep anesthetic.
5. Early counseling after awareness can lessen feelings of confusion or trauma.
6. Anesthesiologists are actively studying the most effective ways to prevent it.
7. Research has dramatically improved safety and comfort the last 20 years.
8. New brain-wave monitoring devices being tested may reduce awareness.
9. A highly trained anesthesia professional should be involved in your surgery.
10. Patients should raise concerns with their anesthesia professional before surgery.

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#### **Questions Patients Should Ask Their Anesthesiologist**

1. Have you ever had a patient experience awareness under anesthesia? How would you handle that?
2. What do you do in the operating room to prevent awareness?
3. What about awareness during a surgery not done with general anesthesia, such as under spinal anesthesia or sedation?
4. I remember portions of my colonoscopy. Have I experienced awareness? Did my anesthesiologist make a mistake?
5. Do you use the brain wave monitor in your OR? Does it ensure that I won't experience awareness?