

Tips to improve obese children's surgical outcomes and health

The American Society of Anaesthesiologists (ASA) is taking action to educate parents about the increased risk of complications faced by obese children undergoing anaesthesia.

The number of obese children has doubled in the past two decades and tripled among adolescents and the ASA encourages parents to help improve both the surgical outcomes and long-term health of America's youth.

Administering anaesthesia to children is complex because their airways are still developing and are prone to collapse during the administration of anaesthesia, and this risk is increased by obesity. Children and adolescents should ideally be as healthy as possible before a surgery. In a recent survey conducted by the CDC, approximately 16.9% of children and adolescents aged 2-19 were obese, with a body mass index (BMI) greater than 30. While obese children and adolescents may experience severe health issues associated with their weight - including asthma, obstructive sleep apnea, bone and joint problems, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes - they are even more at risk during a surgical procedure.

Obesity can lead to complications during surgery

"Obese children have extra tissue surrounding their airway, chest, and abdomen that can impair breathing while under anaesthesia, and limit the amount of oxygen they receive during surgery. This can lead to a range of complications including impairment of lung function and in severe circumstances even brain damage," said Mark Singleton, M.D., ASA member and chair of the committee on paediatric anaesthesia. "As the physicians responsible for protecting the Vital Health of patients when they are at their most vulnerable - before, during and after surgery - we're urging parents and youths alike to educate themselves about the potential risks associated with paediatric obesity and to fight this growing trend by making changes that enable them to lose weight while maintaining an active lifestyle."

The ASA is taking steps to reduce surgery-related risks in obese children and adolescents by providing parents with the following tips to improve their children's surgical outcomes and overall health:

- Make sure your child's anaesthesiologist has experience treating obese youth and learn about the specific risks involved.
- Help your child lose weight before the surgery. Even a small amount of weight loss can have a good impact on your child's surgical outcome.
- Set reasonable short-term and long-term weight-loss goals. Consult with your paediatrician to establish a safe weight-loss program for your child, and discuss this program with your child's anaesthesiologist and surgeon to ensure it won't interfere with the surgery.
- Encourage healthy eating both in and out of the house - before and after surgery.
- Encourage daily exercise before and after surgery, once approved by the surgeon, by signing your child for team sports or after-school physical activities.
- Follow these steps recommended by the ASA to prepare your child for surgery.

Visit www.LifelinetoModernMedicine.com for more information about paediatric obesity and how to improve your child's surgical outcomes and overall health.

Source: American Society of Anaesthesiologists

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>