

Bridging the Gap: Collaborative Preoperative Optimization for the Pediatric Patient

Michael Henry, MD

A man in a red sweater and blue jeans is lying on his back on a floor completely covered with stacks of 100 dollar bills. He has his hands behind his head and a relaxed expression. The background is a solid orange color. In the top left corner, there is a small orange horizontal bar.

Disclosures:

- None

What is “clearance” and why do we need it?

- 4 Million pediatric operative procedures performed annually in the US
- Patients oftentimes have complex medical history or procedures that require medical optimization
- Pediatricians are aware of medical and social dynamics that impact patient care





Chart Review

Encounters Notes

Chart Review

Encounters **Notes**

Preview Refresh Route

Filters Default filter

ROS/Med Hx Physical Exam Anesthesia Plan Note Text

Diagnoses were found in the patient's problem list or medical history that are similar to some of the selectable options. Apply Suggested Diagnoses

Reviewed: Patient Summary Nursing notes

Hx Anesth Complications neg

- + PONV
- + Difficult IV Access
- + Difficult Airway
- + Malignant Hyperthermia
- + Pseudocholinesterase Deficiency
- + Fam Hx Anesthetic complications

NPO Status: Clear Liquids > 2 hours Breast Milk > 4 hours Solids > 6 hours waived due to emergency

Pulmonary neg

- + Active smoking
- + Pneumonia
- + COPD

mild moderate severe

- + Asthma
- + Shortness of breath
- + Recent URI
- + Sleep apnea

Neurological neg

- + Seizures
- + Neuromuscular disease
- + TIA
- + CVA

resolved

- + Headaches
- + Dementia
- + Numbness
- + Weakness

Endocrine/Other neg

- + Diabetes mellitus
- + Hypothyroidism
- + Hyperthyroidism
- + Anemia
- + Coagulopathy
- + Arthritis
- + Cancer
- + Hx Chronic Pain
- + Chronic Opioid use
- + Obesity (BMI 30-39)
- + Morbid Obesity (BMI 40+)

Cardiovascular neg

Exercise tolerance: < 4 METs = 4 METs > 4 METs

- + Pacemaker
- + AICD
- + HTN

well controlled poorly controlled

- + Congenital heart disease
- + Valvular problems/Murmurs

AS AI MR MVP

- + MI
- + CAD
- + CABG/Stent
- + Dysrhythmias
- + Chest Pain
- + Angina
- + CHF
- + Pulmonary Hypertension

Orthopnea

- + PND
- + DOE
- + PVD
- + Hyperlipidemia

NYHA Classification: I II III IV

Reviewed EKG

GI/Hepatic/Renal neg

- + Hiatal hernia
- + GERD

well controlled poorly controlled

- + PUD
- + Hepatitis
- + Liver disease
- + Renal disease

AKI CKD ESRD dialysis

+ Bowel prep

Psychiatric neg

- + Psychiatric Hx
- + Anxiety
- + Depression
- + PTSD

Orthopedics neg

Traumatic Fx Pathologic Fx

Records Surgeries **Cardiology** Media

Records Surgeries Cardiology Media

ACP Note More Clear Filters

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Pediatric POV/PONV Management _{Rx}

Preoperative

- Age ≥ 3 years
- History of POV/PONV/motion sickness
- Family history of POV/PONV
- Post-pubertal female

Intraoperative

- Strabismus surgery
- Adenotonsillectomy
- Otoplasty
- Surgery ≥ 30 mins
- Volatile anesthetics
- Anticholinesterases

1 RISK FACTORS

Postoperative

- Long-acting opioids

2 RISK STRATIFICATION *Consider multimodal analgesia to minimize opioid use.

<p>No Risk Factors</p> <p>↓</p> <p>LOW RISK</p>	<p>1-2 Risk Factors</p> <p>↓</p> <p>MEDIUM RISK</p>	<p>≥ 3 Risk Factors</p> <p>↓</p> <p>HIGH RISK</p>
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LOW RISK

None or 5HT3 antagonist or dexamethasone

3 PROPHYLAXIS

MEDIUM RISK

5HT3 antagonist + dexamethasone

HIGH RISK

5HT3 antagonist + dexamethasone + consider TIVA

4 RESCUE TREATMENT

Use anti-emetic from different class than prophylactic drug - droperidol, promethazine, dimenhydrinate, metoclopramide; May also consider acupuncture/acupressure

Hx Anesth Complications neg

+ PONV	—
+ Difficult IV Access	—
+ Difficult Airway	—
+ Malignant Hyperthermia	—
+ Pseudocholinesterase Deficiency	—
+ Fam Hx Anesthetic complications	—

NPO
Status:

<input type="checkbox"/> Clear Liquids > 2 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Breast Milk > 4 hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Solids > 6 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> waived due to emergency

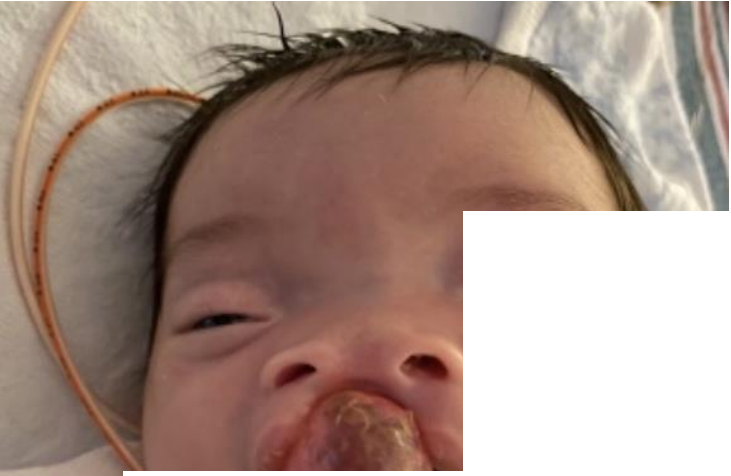


Hx Anesth Complications neg

- + PONV -
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- + Malignant Hyperthermia -
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NPO Status:

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- waived due to emergency



Tracheal Collins Syndrome



eyes with a
ward slant

ened
ones

teeply
ed jaw

oddy shaped ears



Hx Anesth Complications neg

- + PONV -
- + Difficult IV Access -
- + Difficult Airway -
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- + Fam Hx Anesthetic complications -

NPO
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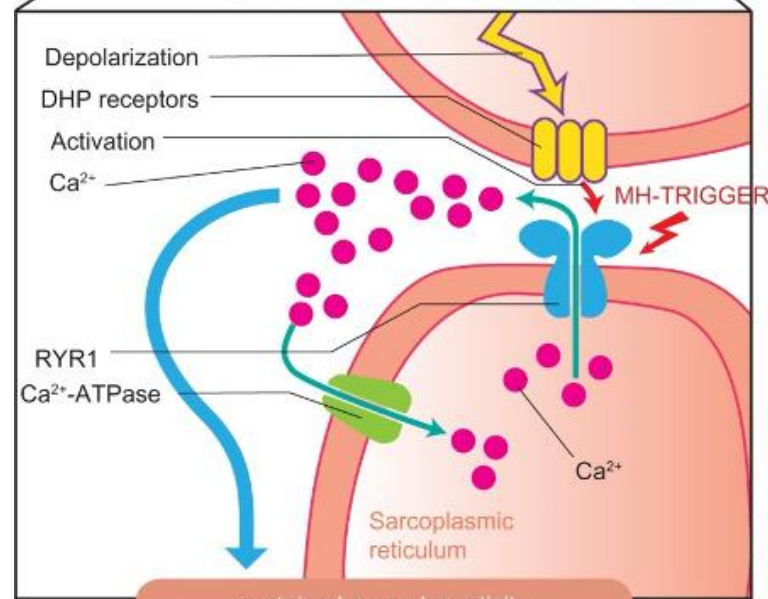
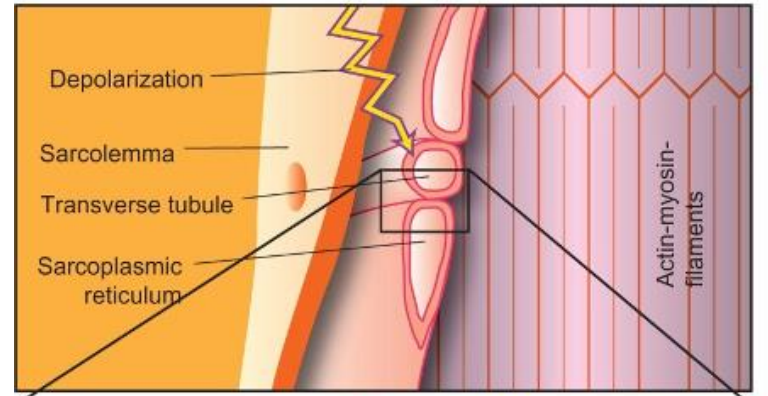
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“My grandmother died during anesthesia”

“My brother had to go to the ICU after a brief dental procedure”



MH Associated Syndromes	Non-MH Associated Syndromes
Central core disease King-Denborough syndrome Multi mini core disease Centronuclear myopathy Congenital fiber type disproportion myopathy Native American myopathy (STAC3 Disorder)	Duchenne muscular dystrophy Becker muscular dystrophy Mitochondrial disease



sustained muscular activity and muscle cell metabolism

enhanced oxygen consumption, excessive CO₂ and heat production

malignant hyperthermia crisis:

- ▶ muscular rigidity
- ▶ hypercapnia
- ▶ hypoxemia
- ▶ acidosis
- ▶ rhabdomyolysis
- ▶ hyperkalemia
- ▶ hyperthermia

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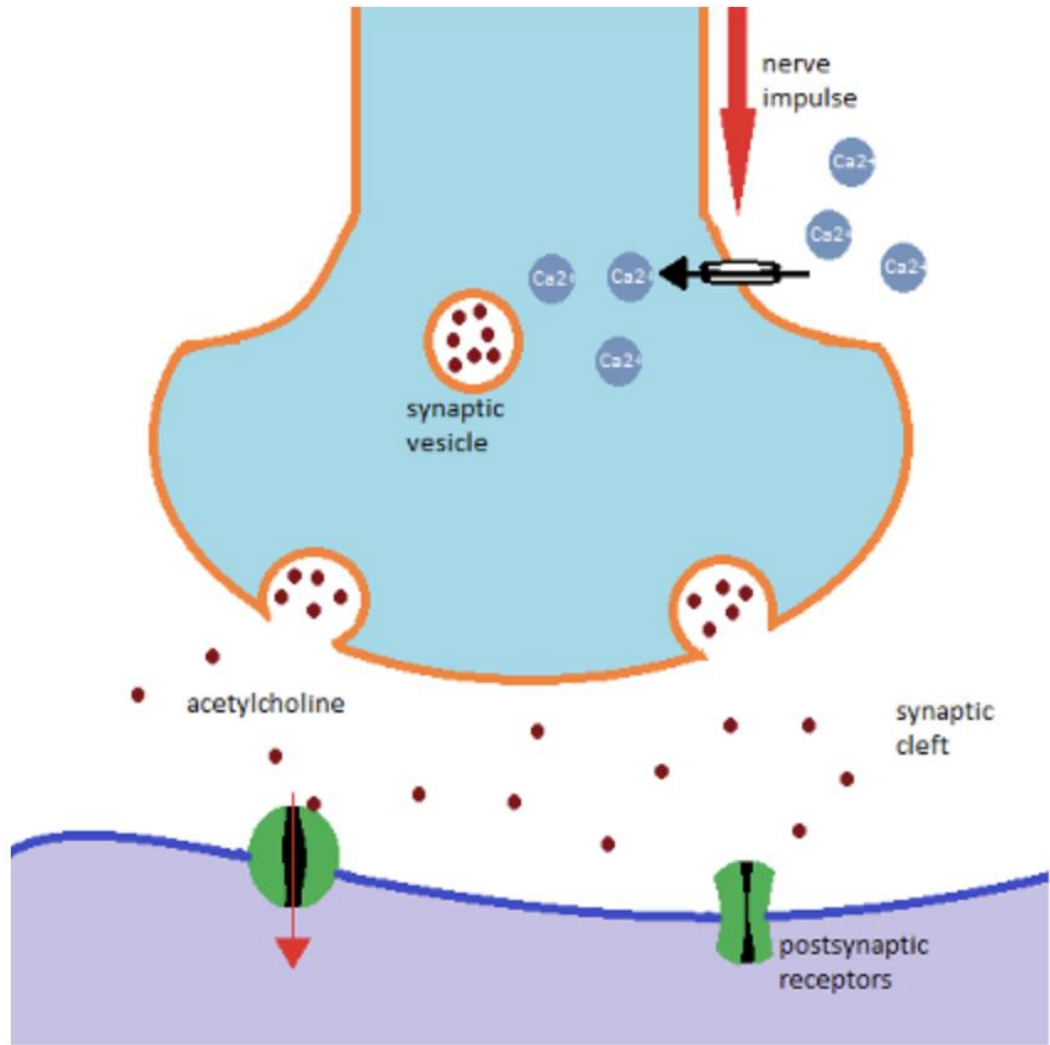


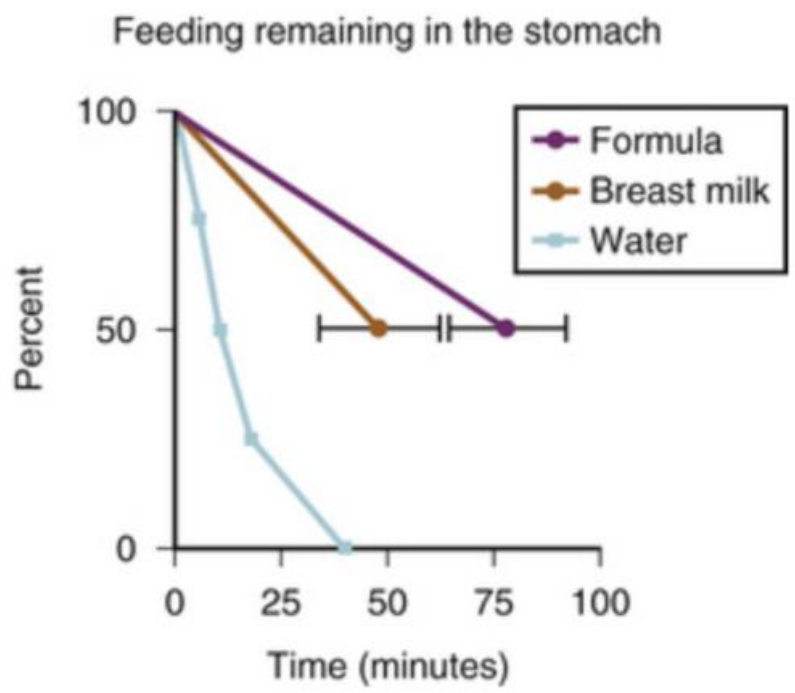
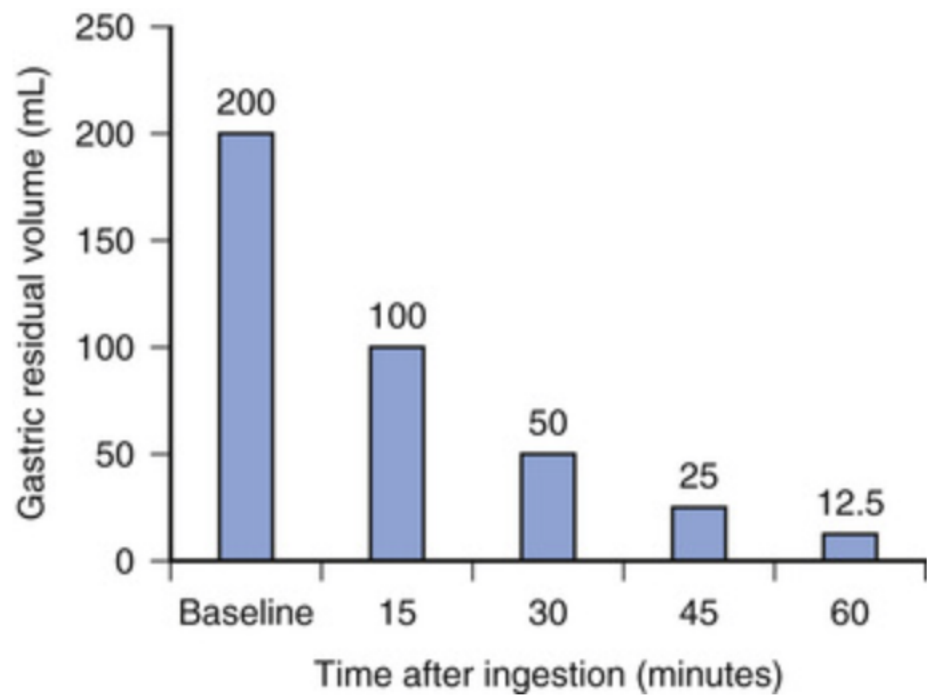
Figure 1. Mechanism of action of neuromuscular blocking agents

Hx Anesth Complications neg

+ PONV	-
+ Difficult IV Access	-
+ Difficult Airway	-
+ Malignant Hyperthermia	-
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Pulmonary

+ Active smoking

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+ COPD

mild moderate severe

+ ⚠️ Asthma

+ Shortness of breath

+ Recent URI

resolved

+ ⚠️ Sleep apnea



Pulmonary		<input type="checkbox"/> neg
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mild	moderate	severe
+ ⚠ Asthma		-
+ Shortness of breath		-
+ Recent URI		-
resolved		
+ ⚠ Sleep apnea		-

Postpone elective surgery 4-6 weeks

- Airway hyperreactivity
- Mucociliary Clearance
- Alveolar recovery

<input type="checkbox"/> Pulmonary	<input type="checkbox"/> neg	
+ Active smoking	-	
+ Pneumonia	-	
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mild	moderate	severe
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- resolved
- + ⚠ Sleep apnea

Factors Affecting Decision for Elective Surgery in a Child With Upper Respiratory Tract Infection

Proceed With Caution	Consider Cancellation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child has “just a runny nose,” no other symptoms, “much better” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents confirm symptoms: fever, malaise, cough, poor appetite, just developed symptoms last night
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and happy child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethargic, ill-appearing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear rhinorrhea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purulent nasal discharge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear lungs and symptoms have leveled off or have improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheezing, rales that do not clear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child <1 year, former premie
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social issues: hardship for parents to be away from work, insurance will run out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other factors: history of reactive airway disease, major operation, endotracheal tube required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No fever 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever >38.5°C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outpatient procedure that will not expose immunocompromised children to possible infectious agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inpatient procedure that may result in exposure of immunocompromised children to viral/bacterial infection

From Tait AR, Malviya S. Anesthesia for the child with an upper respiratory tract infection: still a dilemma? *Anesth Analg.* 2005;100:59-65.

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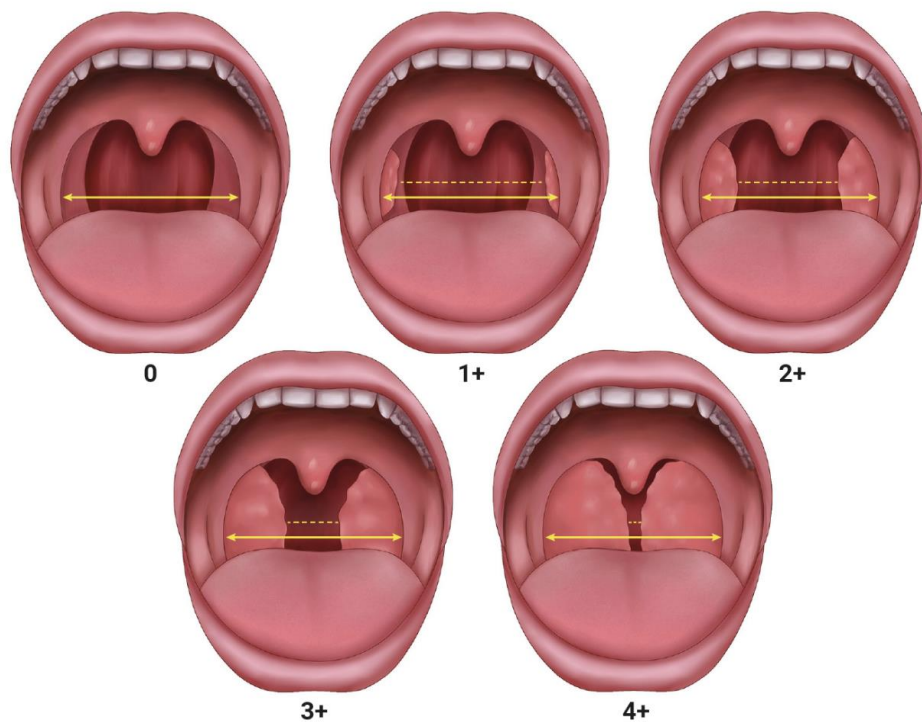
+ Recent URI

resolved

+ ⚠ Sleep apnea

Common indications for overnight admission after tonsillectomy:

- Age < 3yo
- severe OSA (apnea-hypopnea index ≥ 10 obstructive events/hour, oxygen saturation nadir <80%, or both);
- obesity: body mass index greater than 95th percentile;
- Trisomy 21;
- craniofacial anomalies;
- Sickle cell disease;
- neuromuscular disorders;
- mucopolysaccharidoses; and
- bleeding diathesis.



Neurological neg

+ Seizures —

well controlled | poorly controlled

+ Neuromuscular disease —

+ TIA —

+ CVA —

residual symptoms

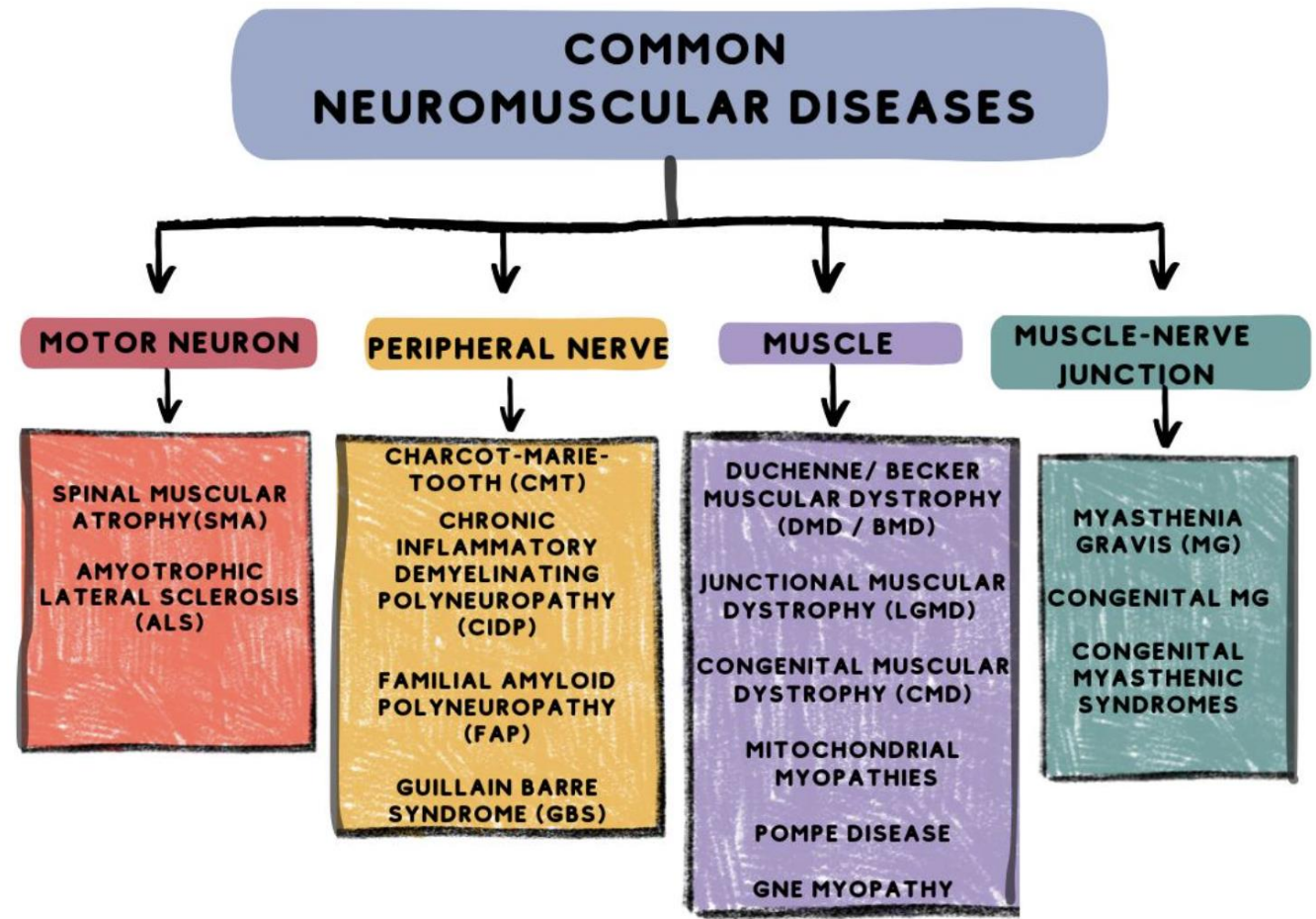
+ ⚠️ Headaches —

C-spine cleared

+ Dementia —

+ Numbness —

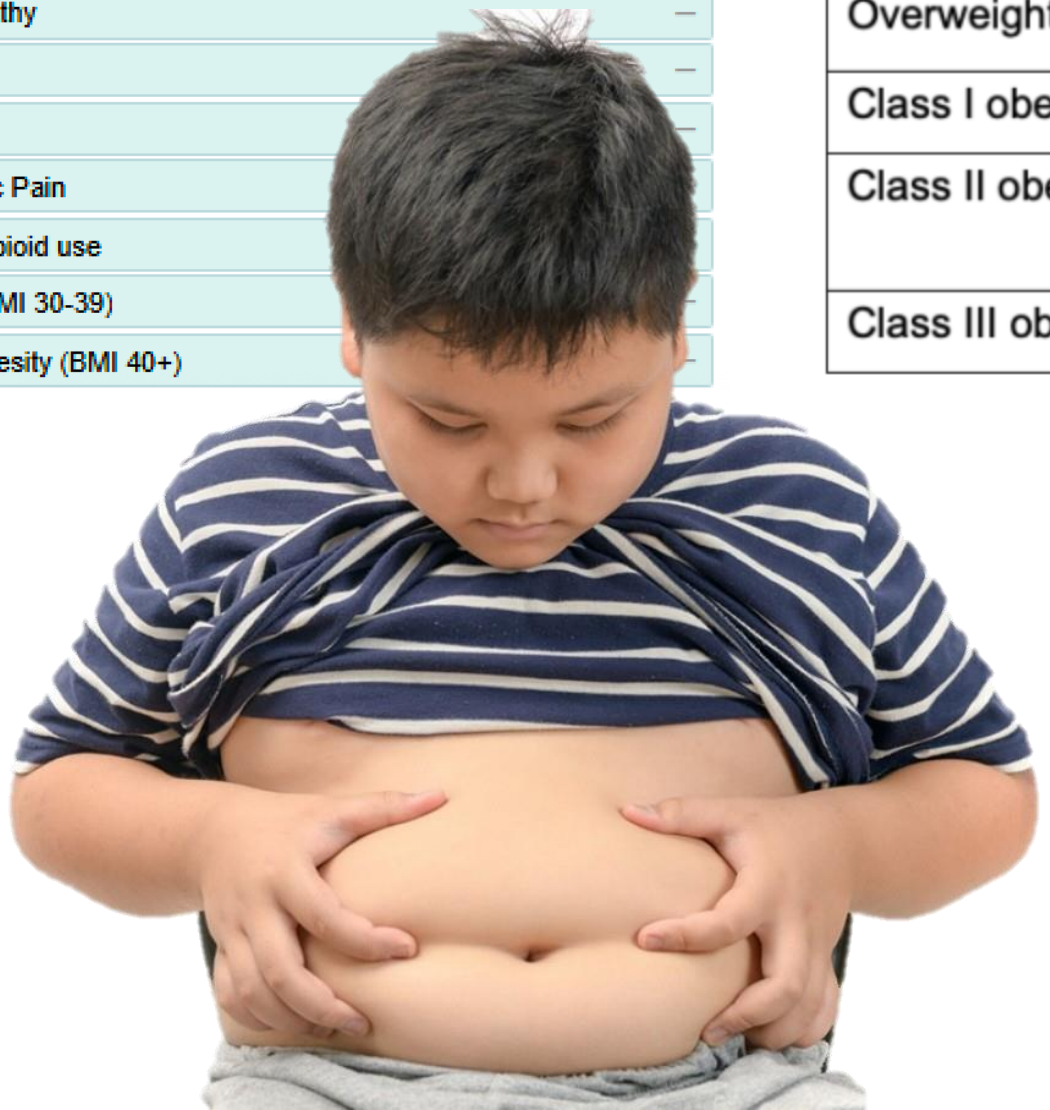
+ Weakness —



Endocrine/Other	<input type="checkbox"/> neg
+ Diabetes mellitus	-
+ Hypothyroidism	-
+ Hyperthyroidism	-
+ Anemia	-
+ Coagulopathy	-
+ Arthritis	-
+ Cancer	-
+ Hx Chronic Pain	-
+ Chronic Opioid use	-
+ Obesity (BMI 30-39)	-
+ Morbid Obesity (BMI 40+)	-



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+ Obesity (BMI 30-39)	-
+ Morbid Obesity (BMI 40+)	-



Status	Description
Normal weight	BMI >5 th percentile and <85 th percentile
Overweight	BMI ≥85 th percentile and <95 th percentile
Class I obesity	BMI ≥95 th percentile
Class II obesity	BMI ≥120% of the 95 th percentile, or BMI ≥ 35 and <40
Class III obesity	BMI ≥140% of the 95 th percentile or BMI ≥ 40

Cardiovascular neg

Exercise tolerance:

< 4 METs = 4 METs > 4 METs

+ Pacemaker -

+ AICD

+ HTN

well controlled poorly controlled

+ Congenital heart disease -

+ ⚠ Valvular problems/Murmurs -

AS AI MR MVP

+ MI -

+ CAD -

+ CABG/Stent

+ Dysrhythmias

+ Chest Pain

+ Angina

+ CHF

+ Pulmonary Hypertension

+ Orthopnea

+ PND

+ DOE

+ PVD

+ Hyperlipidemia

NYHA Classification: I II III IV

Reviewed EKG

Harsh murmur, difficult to localize, bounding pulses, louder than grade II/VI or accompanied by other findings → See Cardiology/order echo

Symptoms and Signs of Heart Disease

Feeding difficulties: disinterest, fatigue, diaphoresis, tachypnea, dyspnea
Poor exercise tolerance
Tachypnea, dyspnea, grunting, nasal flaring, and intercostal, suprasternal, or subcostal retractions
Frequent respiratory tract infections (a result of compression of airways by plethoric vessels leading to stasis of secretions and atelectasis)
Central cyanosis (involving warm mucous membranes: tongue and buccal mucosa) or poor capillary refill
Absent or abnormal peripheral pulses

Modified from Pelech AN. Evaluation of the pediatric patient with a cardiac murmur. *Pediatr Clin North Am.* 1999;46:167-188.

GI/Hepatic/Renal neg

+ Hiatal hernia —

+ GERD —

well controlled poorly controlled

+ PUD —

+ Hepatitis —

A B C D

+ Liver disease —

+ Renal disease —

AKI CKD ESRD dialysis

+ Bowel prep —

Psychiatric neg

+ Psychiatric Hx —

+ Anxiety —

+ Depression —

+ PTSD —

Orthopedics neg

Traumatic Fx Pathologic Fx

RESEARCH

SUID in Inclined Sleepers S. Mintz and A. Collier
Maternal Diabetes and Pediatric Epilepsy B. Briollet et al

SPECIAL ARTICLE

Aluminum Adjuvants in Childhood Vaccines
 E. Nirenberg et al

American Academy
 of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

The Pediatrician's Role in the Evaluation and Preparation of Pediatric Patients Undergoing Anesthesia

Rita Agarwal, MD, FAAP, FASA,¹ Tammy Wang, MD, FAAP,¹ Christina D. Diaz, MD, FAAP,² Jesse M. Hackell, MD, FAAP,³ and the Section on Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine; and Committee on Practice and Ambulatory Medicine

Referral Decisions for Autism S. M. Attar et al

DIAGNOSTIC DILEMMAS

A Bloody Cough and Clouded Lungs: A Systemic Culprit
 C. Wells et al

Community-Engaged Research
 A. Empey et al

American Academy
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TABLE 1. Past Medical History of Importance to Safe Anesthesia Care

Medical History	Significance	Implication (Selected Interventions by Anesthesiologist)
Personal or family history of malignant hyperthermia (MH)	MH is triggered by volatile anesthetics and succinylcholine	Inhalational or mask induction are contraindicated, and the child will need preoperative intravenous (IV) access
Personal or family history of postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV)	Increased incidence of recurrent PONV	Additional antiemetics or change in anesthetic technique
History of emergence delirium, agitation, or night terrors	Agitation or delirium may recur or worsen	Change in anesthetic technique, prepare the family for potential reoccurrence
Personal or family history of delayed emergence	Genetic polymorphisms may lead to recurrent delays in emergence	Change in anesthetic technique, further discussion with family
History of prematurity	Increased airway reactivity and decreased functional respiratory capacity are common even in healthy-appearing children Increased risk of postanesthesia apnea and bradycardia until 60 weeks' postconceptional age ^{35–37} Increased risk of anesthetic or sedation related respiratory risks until at least age 22 y ² Increased incidence of difficult IV access	Avoid or minimize airway manipulation Consider preoperative bronchodilator therapy Consider delaying nonurgent surgery until after 60 weeks' postconceptional age May need vascular access consult or ultrasound-guided IV access
Obstructive sleep apnea or sleep-disordered breathing	Increased sensitivity to opioids and other anesthetics	May not be a suitable candidate for a free-standing ambulatory surgery center Minimize opioids and use alternate analgesic techniques
Recent respiratory tract infection in previous weeks	Increased incidence of perioperative respiratory complications, including the need for supplemental oxygen and/or hospital admission Depending on the causative virus, this risk may persist for up to 2–3 mos	Elective cases may need to be rescheduled When appropriate, anesthetic technique may need to be changed to minimize airway manipulation
COVID-19	Myocarditis or multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MISC)	Determine degree of organ involvement, which may require changes in anesthetic approach
Resolved significant medical issues such as repaired congenital cardiac disease, cardiac arrhythmias, or malignancy in remission	Continued residual physiologic derangements may increase risk in the perioperative period Potential scarring of vessels or long-term effects of chemotherapy agents	Change in anesthetic technique May need additional evaluation or intraoperative monitors
Patient with obesity	May have difficulty with ventilation, intubation, hypertension, diabetes, etc	May need specialized equipment for airway management Medication dosing is altered
Chronic medical conditions	See more details in text	See more details in text

Questions?



Sources:

- Agarwal R, Wang T, Diaz CD, Hackell JM. The Pediatrician's Role in the Evaluation and Preparation of Pediatric Patients Undergoing Anesthesia. *Pediatrics*. 2026;157(3): e2025075744.
- Cote CJ, Lerman J, Anderson BJ. *A Practice of Anesthesia for Infants and Children*. 2024.
- Havidich JE, Beach M, Dierdorf SF, Onega T, Suresh G, Cravero JP. Preterm Versus Term Children: Analysis of Sedation/Anesthesia Adverse Events and Longitudinal Risk. *Pediatrics*. 2016;137(3):e20150463.
- Pinyavat T, Girard T, and Litman RS. Malignant Hyperthermia. In Litman RS, Ambardekar A. *Litman's Basics of Pediatric Anesthesia*. Third Edition. Elsevier Health Sciences; 2022: 159-166.
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- Yu KD, Betts MN, Urban GM, et al. Evaluation of malignant hyperthermia features in patients with pathogenic or likely pathogenic RYR1 variants disclosed through a population genomic screening program. *Anesthesiology* 2024; 140 (1): 52-61.