



Press Release

World Anaesthesia Day 16th October 2014

There are about 180000 operations done each year in Hong Kong public hospitals and 130000 of them need the presence of anaesthesiologists to ensure a safe and painless procedure. Despite the large number of operations performed each year, there are still lots of myths and misunderstanding about anaesthesia. Questions like, “do I need any food supplement and/or Chinese medicine before surgery?”, “will my memory be affected after general anaesthesia?” and “what are the precautions for smokers coming for surgery?” remains a mystery to a lot of Hong Kong citizens.

The World Anaesthesia Day aims to publicize the awareness and benefit of anaesthesia. It commemorates the first demonstration of ether anaesthesia took place in Massachusetts General Hospital on 16th October 1846, which was one of the most significant events in the history of Medicine. The Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists and The Society of Anaesthetists of Hong Kong collaborated to hold a series of activities to promote the World Anaesthesia Day, as well as the celebration of the 25th and 60th Anniversaries of both organizations respectively.

There are around 470 specialist anaesthesiologists in Hong Kong responsible for various anaesthetic procedures, including general anaesthesia, regional anaesthesia and monitored anaesthetic care. Patients will be assessed beforehand to make sure they are fit for their intended operations and anaesthesiologists will tailor made an anaesthetic plan to facilitate a smooth operation and minimize the risk. The mode of anaesthesia and dosage of anaesthetic drugs will be titrated according to the patient’s age, weight, and medical conditions. For instance, adult and children may have different anaesthetic methods for a hernia repair.

Many people misunderstand that anaesthetist is a technician rather than a medical doctor. In some countries such as USA, specially trained nurse anaesthetists could provide simple anaesthesia under the supervision of anaesthesiologists. Whereas, anaesthetic service in Hong Kong like most countries such as United Kingdom and Australia is provided by an anaesthesiologist who is a medical doctor specialized in anaesthesia with 6-year training and passing two professional examinations after graduation from medical school. In addition to careful assessment before operation, anaesthesiologists will continuously monitor the vital signs of patients during surgery to avoid complications, manage the pain, as well as a smooth recovery afterwards.



香港麻醉科醫學院 THE HONG KONG COLLEGE OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS

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Anaesthesiologist also plays an important role in supporting other specialties in hospital-based service, for example, radiotherapy, MRI imaging and obstetric service. For duties outside the operating theatre, anaesthesiologist is also responsible for airway management, resuscitation, acute and chronic pain management and critical care. As the knowledge and techniques of anaesthesia are evolving, new developing areas include intra-operative echocardiogram, ultrasound guided regional anaesthesia, procedural sedation and simulation for medical training. All of these aim at improving the outcome of patients undergoing surgical procedures.

