

# How Billing for Anesthesia Works

Let's begin with calling attention to the fact that Anesthesiologists and CRNAs are not always employed by the medical facility where a patient receives anesthesia care. A billing statement for anesthesia services may arrive separate from the medical facility bill where a surgery or procedure takes place. The bill from an anesthesia provider is for the anesthesia services; developing the anesthesia plan, administering anesthesia and monitoring the patient's vitals before, during and after a surgical procedure. It is possible to have a surgery or procedure at an in-network medical facility, but have an anesthesia provider that is not in-network with your insurance provider. Ask prior to any surgery or procedure if all your care providers are in-network.

## How Anesthesia Charges are Calculated

Many patients have anesthesia billing questions. It's complex and calculated differently than most specialties. Anesthesia services are calculated based on the following criteria:

- ▶ Difficulty of the procedure
- ▶ Time
- ▶ Modifying factors such as, health of the patient

The general formula for calculating anesthesia charges is as follows:

### **(Base units + Time units + Modifying units) x Conversion factor = Anesthesia charge**

**Base unit** = Each anesthesia procedure has an assigned code and each code has a base unit value. The base unit value is reflective of the difficulty and skill required for the procedure. The higher the difficulty the higher the base units will be. Base units are constant and do not regularly change.

**Time unit** = Each anesthesia procedure takes a certain amount of time. A time unit is typically 15 minutes in length, but may be 10-12 minutes depending on the location. If an anesthesia procedure takes 45 minutes, using a 15 minute time unit, this would be included in the anesthesia calculation formula as 3 time units.

**Modifying unit** = A modifying unit accounts for special conditions that affect the anesthesia plan and administration. Modifying factors may include a patient's physical health or emergency situations.

**Conversion factor** = This is the cost that has been assigned to each unit and they are specific to the location of the anesthesia provider administering the anesthetic care. This cost will vary across the United States.

**Total anesthesia charge** = Once you have added the total number of units together it is multiplied by the conversion factor and the total anesthesia charge is calculated.

## Options for Paying Your Anesthesia Bill

Patients that receive anesthesia care from an **abeo** client can expect to receive a billing statement in the mail for the anesthesia services received. Payment options may vary by client but include: payment by mail, phone, or online. The patient billing statement will reflect the options available.

Those seeking financial assistance by means of a payment plan must contact **abeo** at the number provided on the patient billing statement to be put in touch with a billing specialist that is authorized to follow the policies and procedures provided to us by our client.

Alternative resources are available at: [asahq.org/whensecondscount](http://asahq.org/whensecondscount)



*abeo is a leading source on anesthesia billing. We provide billing, practice management and software solutions to over 13,000+ anesthesia providers in over 40 states and have over 50 years of experience in the business of anesthesiology.*