

Appendix 1b

Indications for the use of General Anaesthesia in children:

There are essentially only two indications for GA:

- The child needs to be fully anaesthetised before dental treatment procedures can be attempted
- The surgeon needs the child fully anaesthetised before dental treatment can be performed.

Circumstances and conditions suitable for Paediatric GA:

Please note 1-3 are suitable following unsuccessful attempts with behavioural management techniques and local anaesthetic.

1. Severe pulpitis requiring immediate relief
2. Acute soft tissue swelling requiring removal of the infected tooth/teeth
3. Surgical drainage of an acute infected swelling
4. Single or multiple extractions in a young child unsuitable for conscious sedation
5. Symptomatic teeth in more than one quadrant.
6. Moderately traumatic or complex extractions e.g. ankylosed or infra-occluded primary molars, extraction of broken-down permanent molars
7. Established allergy to local anaesthesia
8. Post operative haemorrhage requiring packing and suturing
9. Examination under GA, including radiographs, for a special needs child where clinical evidence exists that there is a dental problem which warrants treatment under GA.

N.B. Severe pulpitis and acute infection are by far the most common conditions treated under GA.

Circumstances and conditions which rarely justify Paediatric GA:

- Carious, asymptomatic teeth with no clinical or radiographic signs of sepsis
- Orthodontic extraction of sound permanent premolar teeth in a healthy child
- Patient/carer preference, except where other techniques have already been tried.

Extenuating circumstances that override the above limitations are:

- Physical, emotional, learning impairment or a combination of two or more of these
- Children who have attempted treatment using LA alone or LA combined with conscious sedation and been unable to co-operate
- Medical problems which are better controlled with the use of GA.

Reference: UK National Clinical Guidelines in Paediatric Dentistry, Guideline for the Use of General Anaesthesia (GA) in Paediatric Dentistry. Caroline Davies, Mike Harrison, Graham Roberts. The Royal College of Surgeons of England 2008.