

ASA Patient Status

The American Society of Anesthesiologists has developed a classification system for human patient physical status. This system has been widely adapted to veterinary patients. It is important to recognize that the ASA status is not equal to patient risk classification, although a correlation does exist between physical status and outcome. Some additional risk factors that do not contribute to ASA status, but that do contribute to patient outcome, include anesthetist experience, surgeon experience, facilities and availability of monitoring and emergency care, and performance of anesthesia outside normal hours.

- ASA I** **A normal healthy patient**
- ASA II** **A patient with mild systemic disease**
- ASA III** **A patient with severe systemic disease**
- ASA IV** **A patient with severe systemic disease that is a constant threat to life**
- ASA V** **A moribund patient who is not expected to survive without the operation**

A sixth category is used for human patients, but is not encountered in veterinary medicine. ASA VI is a declared brain-dead patient whose organs are being removed for donor purposes.

For more information about ASA status please visit <http://www.asahq.org/clinical/physicalstatus.htm>.