



ASA Physical Status Classification System

Committee of Oversight: Economics

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The ASA Physical Status Classification System has been in use for over 60 years. The purpose of the system is to assess and communicate a patient’s pre-anesthesia medical co-morbidities. The classification system alone does not predict the perioperative risks, but used with other factors (eg, type of surgery, frailty, level of deconditioning), it can be helpful in predicting perioperative risks.

The definitions and examples shown in the table below are guidelines for the clinician. To improve communication and assessments at a specific institution, anesthesiology departments may choose to develop institutional-specific examples to supplement the ASA-approved examples.

Assigning a Physical Status classification level is a clinical decision based on multiple factors. While the Physical Status classification may initially be determined at various times during the preoperative assessment of the patient, the final assignment of Physical Status classification is made on the day of anesthesia care by the anesthesiologist after evaluating the patient.

Current Definitions and ASA-Approved Examples

ASA PS Classification	Definition	Adult Examples, Including, but not Limited to:	Pediatric Examples, Including but not Limited to:	Obstetric Examples, Including but not Limited to:
ASA I	A normal healthy patient	Healthy, non-smoking, no or minimal alcohol use	Healthy (no acute or chronic disease), normal BMI percentile for age	
ASA II	A patient with mild systemic disease	Mild diseases only without substantive functional limitations. Current smoker, social alcohol drinker, pregnancy, obesity (30<BMI<40), well-controlled DM/HTN, mild lung disease	Asymptomatic congenital cardiac disease, well controlled dysrhythmias, asthma without exacerbation, well controlled epilepsy, non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus, abnormal BMI percentile for age,	Normal pregnancy*, well controlled gestational HTN, controlled preeclampsia without severe features, diet-controlled gestational DM.



			mild/moderate OSA, oncologic state in remission, autism with mild limitations	
ASA III	A patient with severe systemic disease	Substantive functional limitations; One or more moderate to severe diseases. Poorly controlled DM or HTN, COPD, morbid obesity (BMI ≥40), active hepatitis, alcohol dependence or abuse, implanted pacemaker, moderate reduction of ejection fraction, ESRD undergoing regularly scheduled dialysis, history (>3 months) of MI, CVA, TIA, or CAD/stents.	Uncorrected stable congenital cardiac abnormality, asthma with exacerbation, poorly controlled epilepsy, insulin dependent diabetes mellitus, morbid obesity, malnutrition, severe OSA, oncologic state, renal failure, muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, history of organ transplantation, brain/spinal cord malformation, symptomatic hydrocephalus, premature infant PCA <60 weeks, autism with severe limitations, metabolic disease, difficult airway, long term parenteral nutrition. Full term infants <6 weeks of age.	Preeclampsia with severe features, gestational DM with complications or high insulin requirements, a thrombophilic disease requiring anticoagulation.
ASA IV	A patient with severe systemic disease	Recent (<3 months) MI, CVA, TIA or CAD/stents, ongoing cardiac ischemia or severe	Symptomatic congenital cardiac abnormality, congestive heart	Preeclampsia with severe features complicated by HELLP or other adverse event, peripartum cardiomyopathy with EF



	that is a constant threat to life	valve dysfunction, severe reduction of ejection fraction, shock, sepsis, DIC, ARD or ESRD not undergoing regularly scheduled dialysis	failure, active sequelae of prematurity, acute hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy, shock, sepsis, disseminated intravascular coagulation, automatic implantable cardioverter-defibrillator, ventilator dependence, endocrinopathy, severe trauma, severe respiratory distress, advanced oncologic state.	<40, uncorrected/decompensated heart disease, acquired or congenital.
ASA V	A moribund patient who is not expected to survive without the operation	Ruptured abdominal/thoracic aneurysm, massive trauma, intracranial bleed with mass effect, ischemic bowel in the face of significant cardiac pathology or multiple organ/system dysfunction	Massive trauma, intracranial hemorrhage with mass effect, patient requiring ECMO, respiratory failure or arrest, malignant hypertension, decompensated congestive heart failure, hepatic encephalopathy, ischemic bowel or multiple organ/system dysfunction.	Uterine rupture.
ASA VI	A declared brain-dead patient whose organs			



	are being removed for donor purposes			
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** Although pregnancy is not a disease, the parturient's physiologic state is significantly altered from when the woman is not pregnant, hence the assignment of ASA 2 for a woman with uncomplicated pregnancy.*

***The addition of "E" denotes Emergency surgery: (An emergency is defined as existing when delay in treatment of the patient would lead to a significant increase in the threat to life or body part)*

References

For more information on the ASA Physical Status Classification system and the use of examples, the following publications are helpful. Additionally, in the reference section of each of the articles, one can find additional publications on this topic.

1. Abouleish AE, Leib ML, Cohen NH. ASA provides examples to each ASA physical status class. *ASA Monitor* 2015; 79:38-9
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2. Hurwitz EE, Simon M, Vinta SR, et al. Adding examples to the ASA-Physical Status classification improves correct assignments to patients. *Anesthesiology* 2017; 126:614-22
3. Mayhew D, Mendonca V, Murthy BVS. A review of ASA physical status – historical perspectives and modern developments. *Anaesthesia* 2019; 74:373-9
4. Leahy I, Berry JG, Johnson C, Crofton C, Staffa S, Ferrari LR. Does the Current ASA Physical Status Classification Represent the Chronic Disease Burden in Children Undergoing General Anesthesia? *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, October 2019;129(4):1175-1180
5. Ferrari L, Leahy I, Staffa S, Johnson C, Crofton C, Methot C, Berry J. One Size Does Not Fit All: A Perspective on the American Society of Anesthesiologists Physical Status Classification for Pediatric Patients. *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, June 2020;130(6):1685-1692
6. Ferrari LR, Leahy I, Staffa SJ, Berry JG. The Pediatric Specific American Society of Anesthesiologists Physical Status Score: A Multi-center Study. *Anesth Analg* 2021 March; 132:807-817. PMID: 32665468