

Anesthesia in Giants

By Lisa Edwards

First do be sure to read Doc Robin's article that she wrote many years ago regarding using certain anesthetics in our giants as she was not only a vet but a giant breed mastiff owner as well. That being said, she has left us and since then there have been new drugs that have entered the market that was not discussed in her original article. **NOTE: Aceprozamine still remains a DO NOT USE for ALL giants!** Make sure your vet's office has it on their files and also remind them again anytime any surgery or any reason for sedation is necessary that they are NOT to use Ace. There are safer drugs.

Do take into consideration that like for us humans, one of the riskiest parts of any surgery is the anesthesia. You never know how your dog will react to it until it's given. And even if they were fine with one combination before, doesn't mean they will again. My vet always practices a "less is more" and sides with caution. He'd rather start at the lowest end and add as he goes vs giving too much. Dosing for our giants is DIFFERENT than dosing for smaller dogs.

If your dog is going under be sure they intubate! Important!

Aceprozamine: DO NOT GIVE

Interesting quick video on Ace in general and note: do NOT use for noise phobias! Makes them more sensitive to it!

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-GsmrFYHkk&fbclid=IwAR2na3-XZonTYp9P29ZpVUppox49sR9epsxO_a3qedK0Djt0fMSF8Q6CMk

Atropine: Have read conflicting things on this drug. My vet usually gave to my mastiffs to help cut back on any excessive drooling/saliva/mucous - never had any problems with its use. Can increase heart rate.

Butorphanol/Buprenorphine: Opioid/pain control.

Dexdomitor: Generally safe but can also decrease heart rate, etc. So do NOT use for dogs with existing heart failure, etc. NOTE: This is also the same drug that is used in the new drug "Sileo" -- an sublingual oral gel that is given to help with anxiety issues in dogs.

Can be REVERSED with **Atipamezole:** Administration of atipamezole after dexmedetomidine rapidly reverses the effects and thus shortens the recovery period. Within 15 minutes dogs and cats are normally awake and standing.

- https://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/2017/20170329137358/anx_137358_en.pdf
- <https://www2.zoetisus.com/products/petcare/dexdomitor>

Ketamine: Usually combined with valium as a pre-anesthetic. Can also add in butorphanol.

Medetomidine: DO NOT USE

Opioids: Can cause sedation but more effective for pain. Class of opioid drugs include: Morphine, Tramadol, oxymorphone, hydromorphone, codeine, Butorphanol/Buprenorphine

Romifidine: Do not use with pre-existing heart issues

- [https://www.vaajournal.org/article/S1467-2987\(16\)31018-2/fulltext](https://www.vaajournal.org/article/S1467-2987(16)31018-2/fulltext)

Rompum/Xylazine: DO NOT USE

IV SEDATION before Inhalant (generally):

- Thiopental/Telazol: IV sedation
- Propofol: IV sedation
- Thiopental (also known as “Pentothal”): Discontinued in the U.S.

INHALANT Anesthetics:

- Isoflurane
- Halothane
- Sevoflurane
- Desflurane

Sedation Protocols - Vetstream: <https://www.vetstream.com/treat/canis/freeform/sedation-sedative-protocols>

AAHA Anesthesia Guidelines for Dogs and Cats*: https://www.aaha.org/globalassets/02-guidelines/anesthesia/anesthesia_guidelines_for_dogs_and_cats.pdf

VASG - Small Anesthesia Guide (Word doc): www.vasg.org/word_docs/english/Anesthesia_Guide_VASG_12_4_04.doc

List of Drugs by Alphabetical Order (VASG): http://www.vasg.org/a_drugs.htm

WSU - Pets and Anesthesia: <https://hospital.vetmed.wsu.edu/2021/12/03/pets-and-anesthesia>