

Title: A SURVEY OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS' ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE REGARDING REGIONAL ANESTHESIA

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Objective: This is a survey of orthopedic surgeons' attitudes and preferences about regional anesthesia.

Methods: This article is an examination of orthopedic surgeons' perceptions about regional anesthesia (RA) through a survey, which was mailed to 768 Canadian orthopedic surgeons and completed by 468 surgeons (61%).

Results: Forty-eight percent of surgeons responding said they direct their patients' choice of anesthesia. Of these, 84% (or 40% of all respondents) directed their patients to choose RA. Respondents' perception of RA tended to be that it is safer than general anesthesia and provides better pain control and less post-operative sedation. The primary reason for favoring RA was decreased pain (32%). Reasons for not favoring RA were delay to the operating room (43%) and unpredictable success (12%).

Discussion: Many orthopedic surgeons influence patients' choices regarding anesthesia. Surgeons appear to be supportive of RA, with 84% of those surveyed directing their patients toward RA. The barriers to surgeons favoring RA were perceived operating room delays and lack of reliability. This perception could be overcome with physician education, the introduction of RA protocols within the surgical unit and the organization of the RA facility.