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Information About Your Anaesthetic Care and Fees

The terms that apply to my fees, including what happens if your operation differs from what was booked, are set out in Fees and Terms, at herman.au/terms.

Thank you for entrusting me with your care. Having an operation is a big deal, and I want you to feel confident about every part of it.

I graduated from the University of Melbourne in 2004 and then completed five years of specialist anaesthesia training to become a Fellow of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (FANZCA). That training included a year of sub-specialist work in cardiac and vascular anaesthesia in Canada, which also qualifies me to perform and interpret perioperative transoesophageal echocardiography: an ultrasound of the heart taken during surgery.

I have been a doctor for more than twenty years, twenty of them in anaesthesia. I have trained and worked alongside specialists at the Royal Women's Hospital, the Royal Children's Hospital, the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Austin Health and Monash Health. I have also volunteered in developing countries, providing free anaesthetic care to disadvantaged children.

I believe experience plays a large part in a good outcome. An anaesthetic is not a single moment: it is a continuous process of planning, watching and adjusting, and it is in the unexpected moments that experience counts most. Over the last four years I have personally given more than 3,150 anaesthetics, around 800 a year, and provided over 3,900 hours of anaesthetic care. My patients have ranged from healthy people having day surgery to the sickest patients having major cardiac and complex surgery, some of whom need intensive care afterwards.

Common concerns before surgery

It is completely normal to feel anxious before an operation. Some of the common concerns are:

Pain afterwards
We will plan your pain relief together before the operation, combining different approaches so that the plan fits you. After surgery we will ask you regularly how comfortable you are, and we will respond quickly.

Nausea and vomiting
You will be given medicines to reduce the likelihood of nausea and vomiting; this is a routine part of your anaesthetic. If you have felt sick after an anaesthetic before, please tell me.

Awareness during surgery
I watch you closely throughout the operation and adjust the anaesthetic as needed. Where appropriate I also use a depth-of-anaesthesia monitor.

Needles
A cannula (drip) is placed with a small needle that comes straight out again, leaving only a soft plastic tube in the vein. Numbing medicine can be used first.

Anaesthetic fees

My fees are set with reference to the Australian Medical Association (AMA) Relative Value Guide. I do not take part in known-gap or no-gap schemes. This means you pay the anaesthetic fee before surgery and then claim any eligible rebate from Medicare and your private health insurer.

Fees vary because they depend on the procedure, your health, whether special monitoring is needed and how long the operation takes, so two patients having the "same" operation can be charged quite differently.

If you would like a written estimate of my fee before your operation, please ask my rooms and I will provide one. This is part of informed financial consent: you should know the likely cost before you agree to proceed.

Fixed fees
For some cases I offer a fixed fee, so you know the cost in advance. This has to be agreed before the day of surgery, and my rooms will tell you whether your case qualifies. If the operation turns out to be different from the booking your estimate was based on, I may charge up to the AMA rate for the procedure that eventuates, whichever arrangement you have chosen. The AMA rate works like a recommended retail price: the AMA sets it and revises it each year. If you would rather not have a fixed fee, your fee will instead be calculated up to that AMA rate.

Your care and my fee
I have asked my rooms to inform me of the arrangement you have chosen only after your procedure, so that you can be assured the decisions I make for you are not influenced by what I am paid.

What you get back
How much you get back depends on your cover and your circumstances. My rooms will contact you before your procedure to explain this.

Your choice of anaesthetist
You should never feel financially pressured to proceed with me. If my fee does not suit your circumstances, I encourage you to raise it with your surgeon and ask whether another anaesthetist is available, including one who takes part in a known-gap or no-gap arrangement. Under Australian competition law each doctor sets their own fees independently: your surgeon does not set mine, and cannot require you to use a particular anaesthetist.

Payment
My rooms will call you to confirm your booking, and payment is required one week before the procedure. If you have any questions about your invoice, my rooms can help. The terms that apply if payment is late are set out in Fees and Terms, at herman.au/terms.

On the day of surgery

You will meet me before your operation. I will review your health, talk through the plan for your anaesthetic and pain relief, and answer your questions. From the moment you go to sleep until you wake, you are monitored continuously, and I am with you the whole way.

I look forward to caring for you.

Best wishes,
Dr Herman Lim