

ASA physical status classification system

The **ASA physical status classification system** is a system for assessing the fitness of patients before [surgery](#). In 1963 the [American Society of Anesthesiologists](#) (ASA) adopted the five-category physical status classification system; a sixth category was later added. These are:

1. Healthy person.
2. Mild [systemic disease](#).
3. Severe systemic [disease](#).
4. Severe systemic disease that is a constant threat to [life](#).
5. A [moribund](#) person who is not expected to survive without the [operation](#).
6. A declared [brain-dead](#) person whose [organs](#) are being removed for [donor](#) purposes.

If the surgery is an emergency, the physical status classification is followed by “E” (for [emergency](#)) for example “3E”. Class 5 is usually an emergency and is therefore usually “5E”. The class “6E” does not exist and is simply recorded as class “6”, as all organ retrieval in brain-dead patients is done urgently. The original definition of emergency in 1940, when ASA classification was first designed, was “a surgical procedure which, in the surgeon's opinion, should be performed without delay,”^[1] but is now defined as “when [a] delay in treatment would significantly increase the threat to the patient's life or body part.”