

**Title:** Parental Perceptions of the Adolescent Patient's Personality as a Predictor of Preoperative Anxiety

**Author(s):** A Clebone, CS Scher, B Vaughan, P Neuburger, J Asnis, J Halperin

**Affiliation(s):** Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, NY

**Introduction:** Parental perceptions often influence anesthesiologist's judgments about pediatric patients. Choice of induction type, premedication, and adjuvant therapies are frequently based on the parent's knowledge of the young child's personality and preferences.

For the adolescent patient, the parent is less frequently consulted due to the patient's greatly expanded, and in many cases, adult like self-awareness and capacity for self-expression.

Anxiety, however, remains difficult to predict for both the clinician and the adolescent patient.

As we have previously reported, 48% of adolescents experienced preoperative anxiety as evidenced by initial preoperative hypertension in the operating room, however, only 8% of adolescents were given preoperative midazolam.

We hypothesized that the parent's perception of the patient's personality would accurately predict the adolescent patient's preoperative anxiety.

**Methods:** The ETAQ-R is a commonly utilized psychological test that measures temperament in early adolescence, and includes a scale filled out by parents about their child. With IRB approval, the parent form was administered preoperatively to the parents of 14 adolescents ages 13-18 presenting for surgery and anesthesia.

**Results:** Initially hypertensive adolescents were rated significantly lower on affiliation than adolescents who were not initially hypertensive (mean difference 3.7 versus 4.4 on a 5 point scale,  $P < 0.037$ , unpaired t test).

**Conclusion:** The parent's perception of the adolescent's personality may assist in evaluating the adolescent's preoperative anxiety. Affiliation, defined as closeness with others, was associated with lower preoperative anxiety as measured by initial hypertension.