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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

The On-call Anesthesiologist: A Physiological Fireman?



The Fireman

Cosack & Co.

Buffalo, NY

Cosack & Company's 1881 image of *The Fireman* depicts a partially dressed rescuer prepared to leap out of bed—with his right foot planted on the floor and his right hand resting on his trouser-covered fire boots. Ready to launch from sleep at a moment's notice, the fireman reminds me of the on-call anesthesiologist. Rather than extinguishing flames, the physician-anesthetist is prepared to battle the heat of malignant hyperthermia. Whether racing off to command an airway or to administer unscheduled anesthetics for ambulated traumas, "takeback" open-heart cases, or emergency C-sections, the on-call anesthesiologist, like Cosack's fireman, often sleeps less than restfully.... (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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