

Intravenous sedation

Your dentist has recommended that you have intravenous sedation. This means that a sedative drug (medicine) is given to you by injection into a vein. The sedation makes you drowsy and helps reduce anxiety. *It is not a general anaesthetic and you will not be unconscious for your treatment.*

Conscious intravenous sedation is usually given by using a single drug called midazolam. A dose of the drug is chosen for you individually. It is given by injection. This is usually into a vein in the back of your hand or in your arm through a cannula.

A cannula is a thin flexible tube. A needle is used to put the cannula in but is then removed immediately. It is normal to feel a sharp scratch when the cannula is inserted. Once the cannula is in the vein, the sedation drug can be given without using any more needles. The cannula remains in until the dentist has checked that you have recovered from the sedation but it will be removed before you go home.

It is usual to have at least two appointments. **The first appointment will be an assessment** when your dental treatment under conscious sedation will be planned and discussed with you. The dental treatment under sedation will take place at the second and subsequent appointments.

Your dentist and members of the dental team are trained to give sedation. They watch you closely and treat any problems that may develop. They are also required to use appropriate monitoring equipment during sedation. There will be a recovery area where you will be observed until you have made a full recovery from the sedation.

As with the administration of any medicines, there are risks associated with intravenous sedation. These might include:

- A reduction of oxygen in the blood stream due to poor breathing during sedation. You may be asked by your dentist/sedationist to take deep breaths to correct this. Your breathing and oxygen levels will be monitored throughout the procedure.
- Bruising at the site of the cannula. This may take several days to fade completely.

Very rare risks include allergic reactions to the sedative drugs that you have been given or vomiting during the procedure. Your dentist/sedationist will discuss any

concerns that you may have prior to the procedure taking place.

It is important that you let the dentist know your medical history, including any medicines that you are taking. The dentist will need to know if you have ever had any problems with having either sedation or a general anaesthetic.

If you think you may be pregnant, you need to let the dentist know. You may need to come back to have your treatment at another time. You should let the dentist know if you are breastfeeding.

Your dentist will discuss with you and explain what you are able to eat and drink prior to your appointment. We advise patients to have a light meal more than 2 hours before your planned procedure. It is important that these instructions are followed carefully.

The information provided here is a general guide for patients having dental treatment with sedation. As part of the face-to-face discussions with your dentist, you may be given advice that is specific to your treatment plan. This may differ in some areas to the general principles outlined here.

Before any treatment is started, the dentist will ask you to confirm consent. This means that you understand the planned treatment and how you will receive the sedation.

What to expect

You will remain conscious during this kind of sedation.

You may experience a temporary loss of memory during the time that you are sedated. Many patients have no memory of the procedure at all. You may feel unsteady on your feet for some hours after the procedure. Your ability to think clearly and make judgements may be affected for the next 24 hours. You may experience some forgetfulness.

Once you are sedated, the dentist will use local analgesia (pain relief that numbs the site of the dental treatment). This will be given in the form of an injection in your mouth at the site of the dental treatment. The effects of this can last for many hours following completion of your treatment.

You will spend some time in the recovery area following your treatment. You will be monitored by the dental team before you can go home. **You must be accompanied by an able-bodied adult who can take responsibility for you following your treatment.**

This person/another suitable responsible adult will need to stay with you overnight. If arrangements have not been made for someone to accompany you after treatment, you will not be able to have the sedation.

If you have any questions or are unclear about having your sedation, then do not hesitate to ask your dentist.

After the treatment

Your judgement will be affected by the drugs. This is similar to the effects of consuming alcohol. You should not drive a car, ride a bicycle or operate machinery until the following day. In some cases, this may be for as long as 24 hours. You should also not take responsibility for the care of others, use sharp implements or

cook. It would be unwise to make any irreversible decisions for up to 24 hours following your treatment. Owing to the after effects of the drugs used, care should be taken when using the internet for personal communication.

Before you are discharged, the dentist or dental nurse will give you and the adult accompanying you (escort) important information about your care. You will be given information relating to any local analgesia and the treatment you have received. The dentist will also provide details of pain relief as well as how and when to take other prescription medicines.

You will be given a telephone number of who to contact if you have any problems as a result of your treatment.¹

¹ Adapted from Standards for Conscious Sedation in the Provision of Dental Care. The dental faculties of the royal colleges of surgeons and the Royal College of Anaesthetists 2015. Report of the Intercollegiate Advisory Committee for Sedation in Dentistry

The day of your dental procedure

Please arrive **promptly** for your appointment.

Do not bring children with you.

You can have a light meal/breakfast more than **2** hours before your appointment. Please do not starve for long periods before your appointment as it will make you feel unwell.

Bring with you a list of any medicines that you are currently taking. You should **take your routine medicines** on the day of the procedure. Do not alter your medications unless you have been advised to by your clinician. Please let the dentist know if your medical history has changed since you last saw the dentist.

If you think you may be **pregnant**, you need to let the dentist know. You may need to come back to have your treatment at another time. You should let the dentist know if you are breastfeeding.

It is sensible to **wear loose, comfortable clothing and flat shoes**. You may need to remove any contact lenses so remember to take your glasses or a replacement pair of lenses for use once the treatment is finished.

The dentist will need to monitor you carefully while you are sedated. To help with this, **please remove nail varnish and do not wear excessive make up or jewellery**.

Do not bring valuables with you.

If you feel unwell on the day of the procedure, please telephone the number provided.

It is *essential* that a **responsible adult escort** is available to accompany you on the day and look after you following your procedure (see additional leaflet provided about 'Patient escort information'). They need to arrive and check in at reception at the same time as you at your specified appointment time. **If you do not have an escort, you will not be able to have your procedure under sedation.**

For **24 hours after** your procedure under sedation you must **not**:

- Drive a vehicle
- Operate any machinery
- Take responsibility for the care of others
- Sign important documents
- Cook (including handling and boiling kettles, use of sharp implements)
- Return to work

Driving within this period is the equivalent of driving under the influence of drugs, and will be treated as such by the police and courts. We are also advised that your insurance may be void in these circumstances.

The effect of alcohol will be much greater whilst you have any sedative drug left in your body. We suggest you **avoid consumption** of alcohol entirely for at least 24 hours.

It is imperative that you either arrange to be driven home or take a taxi home with your responsible adult escort following your surgery.

Some of the drugs and procedures performed may cause symptoms after your treatment. You will be advised on aftercare together with your escort. The dentist will explain the likelihood of possible discomfort following your dental procedure and make recommendations about the need for pain killers.

After your treatment, you will be given a telephone number of who to contact if there are any problems.

Patient escort information

Important information for adults accompanying patients having dental treatment with sedation

You have been asked to accompany someone who is having dental treatment under sedation.

Patients can feel less anxious if they receive a sedative drug (medicine) before or during their dental treatment. The drugs used can cause some patients to feel a little disorientated or confused for a short time after the treatment.

It is important that someone will be responsible for them and take care of them for the remainder of the day. It will be necessary for someone to stay with them overnight.

You may not be allowed to stay with the patient during the procedure. The dental team are well trained and equipped to look after the patient during the surgery.

You will be asked to accompany the patient in the recovery area while important aftercare instructions will be given. It is important that you follow these instructions as the patient may not recall all the advice given owing to the effects of the sedative medication.

The patient will have been given a telephone number of who to contact if you have any concerns.

The patient will not be allowed to go home until the dentist is satisfied that the patient is in the care of a responsible adult (over 18 years of age). The escort must be present with the patient as they leave the dental surgery. Some patients take a little longer than others to be ready to go home so please be aware that a precise time cannot always be given.

Please **do not bring children with you on the day of surgery.**

It is imperative that all your attention is focused on looking after the patient and getting them home safely following the surgery. Arrangements should be made for the care of children at home with another responsible adult.

The patient's judgement (ability to think clearly) is likely to be affected. Patients should not make any irreversible decisions for up to 24 hours following their treatment.

Patients should be encouraged to rest for a while once they are home. It is not recommended for them to be responsible for the care of others until the next day. Patients are advised to avoid cooking or using domestic appliances for up to 24 hours following their surgery. Provisions

should be made for responsible adult supervision and help with these tasks.

Patients should not drive a vehicle, ride a bicycle, operate machinery or drink alcohol for up to 24 hours following the procedure. The dentist will advise the patient accordingly at the consultation appointment, prior to the day of treatment. Owing to the after effects of the sedative medication used, care should be taken when using the internet for personal communication.

The dentist will explain to the patient which pain relief medicines he or she may take. Patients should take their usual prescribed medicines unless otherwise directed by their doctor or dentist.

If you have any queries relating to this information leaflet please do not hesitate to ask the dental team. The safety of the patient is our primary objective and these instructions have been prepared to ensure this continues following discharge of the patient from the dental surgery.