

PATIENT INFORMATION

Intravenous Sedation

What is intravenous sedation?

Intravenous sedation is an effective and safe way of reducing anxiety to allow dental treatment to be carried out. It is used widely throughout medicine to reduce anxiety for simple surgical procedures or investigations.

A sedative is injected into a vein in the arm or back of the hand. This relaxes the patient and reduces anxiety about receiving dental treatment.

Sedation is not a general anaesthetic and you will remain conscious during your treatment. However, most patients can remember little or nothing of the dental procedure. This is only temporary and does not affect any part of your memory before the drug is given.

Following treatment, the patient will need to wait until the effects of the sedation have worn off sufficiently before going home.

What are the benefits?

Many patients are anxious about having dental treatment. Sedation can reduce anxiety, helping patients to receive treatment or making treatment more pleasant.

What problems might occur?

Sedation is very safe. Rarely a patient can experience nausea and vomiting. Discomfort and bruising might occur at the site where the sedative was injected. The patient will feel tired for the rest of the day.

What are the alternatives?

Your dentist will have discussed your individual anxiety control options and you will have agreed which you would like to use but to remind you, you can have your dental treatment without sedation, or use a different type of sedation. This could be a tablet that will relax you before your appointment. This leaflet describes intravenous sedation. Please feel free to discuss this further with your dentist.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Important information for adults accompanying patients having dental treatments with sedation

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

This leaflet explains your responsibilities.

Patients can feel less anxious if they receive a sedative drug before or during their dental treatment however the drugs used can remain in the body for 24 to 48 hours. This will cause patients to feel tired, disorientated or confused and forgetful for some time after the treatment. Their ability to make informed decisions will be impaired, even though they may appear to feel completely normal. As the responsible person, you need to ensure that they are taken care of for the rest of the day and supervised overnight. This responsibility may be shared but you must hand over to another adult explaining their role.

The team will meet you and confirm that suitable arrangements are in place before the patient is sedated. If this is not possible then the sedation appointment will need to be rearranged. You will need to remain at the Day Surgery Unit during the appointment. Before taking the patient home, you will be told of the nature of the dental treatment and any post-operative care required including pain control, as well as reinforcement of these instructions.

Please ensure that the patient does not drive a vehicle, make important decisions or sign legal documents for at least 24 hours. For the rest of the day they should not ride a bike, operate machinery, return to work, drink alcohol or take any mood-altering drugs. They must not be in sole charge of others (babies, children and other dependents) until fully recovered.

As they will be forgetful, it is most important that any medication is supervised and the time of any medication administered noted. Painkillers can take 20 minutes to start working and during this time, the patient may well forget that they have already taken medication and take further doses, risking inadvertent overdose.

Emergency Contact:

Torbay Hospital Switchboard (01803) 614567 and ask for the on-call Oral and Maxillofacial

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.