

If you are having treatment under IV sedation

Intravenous sedation is a form of anxiety control that makes treatment more comfortable. It is safe and effective. This leaflet explains what is involved, what to expect, and what you need to arrange beforehand. Please read it before your appointment, and ask your surgeon about anything you are unsure of.

WHAT IS INTRAVENOUS SEDATION?

Intravenous sedation is usually given using a single drug called midazolam. The dose is chosen for you individually. It is given by injection, 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 it is removed immediately, and it is normal to feel a sharp scratch as it is inserted. Once the cannula is in the vein, the sedation drug can be given without using any more needles.

The sedation will make you feel more relaxed and less anxious. The cannula stays in place until your surgeon has checked that you have recovered, and it is removed before you go home.

It is usual to have two appointments. The first is an assessment, when your treatment under sedation is planned and discussed with you. The treatment takes place at the next appointment.

Your surgeon and the dental team are trained to give sedation. They watch you closely, use monitoring equipment throughout, and treat any problems that may develop. You recover in the dental room until you have made a full recovery.

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

- Local anaesthetic alone, which means the area being treated feels numb while you are completely alert during the procedure.
- A general anaesthetic, where you are completely asleep during your operation. This carries increased risk, cannot be given if you have certain medical conditions, and is often better avoided if the operation is a minor one.

RISKS

As with any administration of 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 to take deep breaths to correct this. Your breathing and oxygen levels are 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 sedation drugs, or vomiting during the procedure.
- The sedative may not reduce your anxiety as much as expected.

It is important to tell your surgeon your medical history, including any medicines you are taking, and whether you have ever had problems with sedation or a general anaesthetic. Please also tell us if you think you may be pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Before treatment starts, your surgeon will confirm your consent, so that you understand the planned treatment and how the sedation will be given.

- You will remain conscious during the sedation.
- You may experience a temporary loss of memory during the time you are sedated, and many patients have no memory of the procedure at all.
- You may feel unsteady on your feet for some hours afterwards, and your ability to think clearly and make judgements may be affected for the next 24 hours.
- Once you are sedated, your surgeon will numb the area with an injection. You will not be aware of being given the local anaesthetic, as it follows the sedation.
- After treatment you will take time to recover in the dental surgery, where the sedation nurse will monitor your recovery.
- Your surgeon will check you before you go home. You must be accompanied by an able-bodied adult who can take responsibility for you, and that person may need to stay with you overnight. If no one has been arranged to accompany you, the sedation cannot go ahead.

BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

- Arrange for an able-bodied adult (your escort) to come with you, stay in the waiting area, and take you home.
- You will not be treated under sedation if you come without an escort.
- Your escort should not be looking after anyone else except you.
- Your surgeon will explain what you may eat and drink beforehand. You will be given this in writing, and it is important to follow it carefully.
- If you have a cough, cold or other illness, please contact the practice before the appointment, as treatment may need to be postponed.
- Tell us if you think you may be pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding.

ON THE DAY

- Arrange for children to be looked after at home. We are unable to look after them while you are having treatment.
- Come with your escort. Without one, you will not be treated.
- You may have a light meal before your appointment.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing.
- Take your regular medication as normal, and bring any medicines or inhalers you have been prescribed.
- Leave all valuables and jewellery at home.
- Do not wear make-up, nail polish or nail extensions. A simple face cream is fine.
- Use the bathroom before treatment starts.

GOING HOME

- You should be ready to go home about 1 to 2 hours after the start of your treatment.
- You will be assessed to make sure you are ready to leave.
- Your surgeon will give you any extra care instructions for the treatment carried out that day.
- Travel home with your escort by car or taxi, as the sedative affects your coordination.
- Do not travel home by public transport.

FOR 24 HOURS AFTERWARDS, YOU SHOULD NOT

Your judgement will be affected by the sedative, in a way similar to the effects of drinking alcohol. You should not:

- Drive a motor vehicle or ride a bike.
- Operate machinery or electrical items of any kind.

- Drink alcohol or take any sedative drugs.
- Be responsible for other people or children.
- Return to work immediately.
- Make significant decisions or sign any important documents.
- Climb heights, such as ladders or scaffolding.
- Use sharp implements or cook.

Owing to the after effects of the sedative, care should also be taken when using the internet for personal communication.

WHEN YOU GET HOME

- You can eat and drink as soon as you get home, although it is best to wait until the effects of any local anaesthetic have worn off, usually 2 to 3 hours.
- Before you are discharged, your surgeon will give you and your escort information about your care, including pain relief and when to take any other prescribed medication.

If you need help or advice. If you have any concerns after your treatment, please contact the practice by phone. For urgent concerns outside normal working hours, call NHS 111, or attend your local emergency department.

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