

Intravenous Sedation

Information and advice for patients

Oral Surgery

What is Intravenous Sedation?

Intravenous sedation is where a sedative drug (medicine) is given to you by injection into a vein. The sedation makes you drowsy and helps reduce anxiety. 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. 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.

Before treatment:

- **DO** have a light meal 3 hours before the appointment.
- **DO** wear loose comfortable clothing with sleeves that you can roll up.
- **DO** take all of your routine medications at the usual time and bring them with you.
- **DO** wear flat-heeled shoes.
- **DO NOT** wear nail varnish or lipstick.

What will happen during my treatment?

The team providing your treatment are trained to give sedation. They will 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.

Are there any risks?

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.

Intravenous Sedation

Information and advice for patients

Oral Surgery

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.

What to expect

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.**

You will remain conscious/"awake" 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 anaesthetic in your mouth (pain relief that numbs the site of the dental treatment). You will spend some time in the recovery area following your treatment. You will be checked by the person giving you the sedation before you can go home.

Escort arrangements

You must be accompanied by an able-bodied adult who can take responsibility for you following your treatment. This person may 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.

What about afterwards?

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. Go home and rest quietly for the remainder of the day.

- **DO NOT** drive.
- **DO NOT** use any machinery (e.g., cooker/iron/power tools)
- **DO NOT** sign any important documents.
- **DO NOT** drink alcohol.
- **DO NOT** make yourself inaccessible e.g., lock the bathroom door.

Intravenous Sedation

Information and advice for patients

Oral Surgery

- **DO NOT** be responsible for any children/dependants. You will need a **SECOND** responsible adult, as well as the adult responsible for you, to care for any children/dependants.

Before you are discharged, the dentist or dental nurse will give you and the adult accompanying you (escort) important information about your care.

SEDATION WILL NOT BE GIVEN IF:

- You arrive without an adult who will wait and take you home
- You arrive with children/dependants
- You arrive more than 15 minutes late.

Contact Us

Department of Oral Surgery

City Hospital
Dudley Road
Birmingham
B18 7QH

If you have any concerns, please telephone the department on 0121 507 4311 / 4313.

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