



Patient Information Leaflet Intravenous Sedation

Cork University Dental
School & Hospital



This leaflet has been designed to explain intravenous sedation and it contains answers to many frequently asked questions. If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer, or if you would like further information, please ask us.

What is intravenous sedation?

Intravenous sedation is a technique that uses a drug called midazolam to help you to cope with fear and anxiety during dental treatment. It is also very helpful if you have a tendency to gag during dental treatment. The drug is given through a drip into a vein in your hand or arm and the amount used is very unlikely to make you unconscious. This way of helping you to relax during treatment can help you to avoid the need for a general anaesthetic.

Who can be sedated?

We can use this form of sedation if you are over 14. It is not suitable for children.

Is intravenous sedation safe?

It is not suitable for everybody but your dentist will check carefully to make sure that you can have sedation safely. Before you are given an appointment for sedation, you will have your height and weight measured. We will also check your blood pressure, pulse and the level of oxygen in your blood. If you have certain diseases or you are very overweight, you will not be able to have intravenous sedation. Your dentist will explain this to you.

What will happen at my appointment?

Before we start your treatment, we will check your blood pressure, pulse and oxygen level again. These will also be checked regularly while you are sedated. We will put a drip into your hand or your arm – wherever the best vein is. The drug is then given through the drip in very small amounts at a time. We will watch you carefully and begin treatment only when you are fully relaxed. You will not be asleep but you will be drowsy. You may or may not remember the treatment later on. We will keep you in the surgery for at least an hour after your treatment until we are sure you are ready to go home.

Will my treatment change because of the sedation?

No. Once you are relaxed, your treatment will be exactly the same. You will still need injections to make your mouth numb. Sedation does not relieve pain – only anxiety.

Please see the other side of this leaflet for instructions about what you must do before and after your sedation appointment.

Instructions for Patients having Treatment under Intravenous Sedation

It is essential to follow these instructions.

If you don't, your treatment will be cancelled.

Before your appointment:

1. Do not eat or drink in the two hours before your appointment.
2. Before the two-hour fasting period you should have a light meal, for example, toast and tea, coffee or fruit juice.
3. Do not drink alcohol or take any recreational drugs in the 24 hours before your appointment. These may be dangerous as they affect how you react to the sedation.
4. You **must** bring a responsible adult with you to your appointment. This person must meet our staff before your treatment and take you home afterwards. They must not have any other people (adults or children) to care for during this time.
5. If you take any regular medications, you should take them at your usual times unless your dentist has told you not to.
6. If you develop any illness, you should let us know immediately as we may have to change your appointment.
7. Wear loose, comfortable clothes for your appointment.
8. You must remove all nail varnish and false nails before your appointment.

After your appointment:

1. You should travel home by car rather than by public transport (but you must not drive yourself).
2. You must have a responsible adult to care for you during the first 24 hours after your treatment.
3. For **24 hours** after your appointment you **must not** –
 - drive any vehicle
 - operate any machinery
 - use any domestic appliance
 - return to work
 - make any important decisions
 - sign any legal documents
 - be responsible for anyone else (adult or child)

The effects of the sedation will take some time to wear off and you are likely to feel drowsy, disorientated and forgetful for the rest of the day. You may have some bruising where the drip was placed in your arm or hand.

If you have any problems or worries after your appointment you should contact us immediately at 021 – 4545100 for advice and help.