

## Dental treatment under IV / transmucosal sedation

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net).

### What is IV / transmucosal sedation?

Anxiety about having dental treatment can be reduced by sedative drugs (medicines), which make the patient drowsy and less anxious. The dentist will be able to explain why the patient might benefit from having sedation.

IV (intravenous) sedation is the administration of a sedative drug (usually midazolam) via a cannula (small plastic tube). The cannula is usually placed, using a needle, into a vein in the back of the hand or in the arm. A cream containing local anaesthetic may be used to make the injection site numb before the cannula is inserted.

For patients who are very anxious and/or have learning disabilities, transmucosal sedation is sometimes used before (or occasionally instead of) IV sedation. Transmucosal sedation is usually given in the form of a fine spray squirted into the nose. The sedation drugs are absorbed through the lining of the nose and enter the bloodstream. It can take several minutes for the effects of the drug to start working.

If necessary, the dentist can use the cannula to reverse the effects of the sedation.

### Why is it needed?

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

### Are there any risks?

The sedation is very safe and the effects wear off quickly.

The dentist and members of the dental team are trained to give sedation. They watch the patient closely and treat any problems that may develop. An oxygen supply will be available and oxygen will be given by mask if necessary. They are also required to use appropriate monitoring equipment during sedation. There will be a recovery area where the patient will be observed until he or she has made a full recovery from the sedation.

It is a widely used technique but, as with the administration of any medicines, there are risks associated with intravenous/transmucosal sedation. These risks include:

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

Very rare risks are:

- Allergic reactions to the sedative drugs the patient has been given, or
- Vomiting during the procedure.

The dentist/sedationist will discuss any concerns that you may have about the patient prior to the procedure taking place.

## **What to expect**

The method of dental treatment planned for the patient will be discussed at an initial assessment appointment. The dental treatment will take place at the second and subsequent appointments. In exceptional circumstances, treatment may be carried out on the same day as the assessment. It is important that the dentist knows of any recent changes in the patient's medical history and of any medicines being taken.

If the patient may be pregnant or breastfeeding, the dentist must be informed. The patient may need to come back to have the treatment at another time.

Before the treatment is started, the dentist will need to take a full medical history and, if necessary, contact the patient's general medical practitioner or specialist. The patient will need to have their blood pressure taken with a cuff on their arm and the level of oxygen in their blood measured with a clip on their finger.

## **What is the best way to prepare for the appointment?**

### **The patient SHOULD:**

- Take a light meal up to two hours before the appointment (unless the dentist or sedationist has advised otherwise).
- Wear loose-fitting clothing and flat shoes.
- Take routine medicines unless the dentist/sedationist has advised not to.
- Attend with a responsible adult who will take the patient home by car/taxi and look after the patient for the rest of the day. If this person normally looks after other children/dependents, they may need to make alternative arrangements for these other dependents, as they will need to concentrate on the patient.
- Tell the dental staff if the patient has attended a doctor or hospital since their last appointment.
- Inform the clinic if the patient is ill with a cold, flu or any other contagious illness.

### **The patient SHOULD NOT:**

- Wear makeup, especially lipstick, coloured nail polish or false nails;
- Drink alcohol for 24 hours before the appointment.

**The patient's judgement may be affected for 24 hours after the appointment. We advise that the patient avoids doing the following for up to 24 hours after the appointment:**

- Drive a car, ride a bicycle, use an electric wheelchair or operate equipment (including kitchen and domestic appliances, e.g. kettle)
- Return to school/work
- Take exercise, participate in sports or climb heights
- Drink alcohol
- Make important/irreversible decisions, make purchases or use the internet

### **Follow-up**

If there are any problems after the treatment, please contact the clinic where the treatment was carried out.

### **Further information**

If you have any questions, please ask the dentist. We are here to help you.

You may read more about our service on our website: [www.healthyteethdevon.nhs.uk](http://www.healthyteethdevon.nhs.uk).



#### **Exeter NHS Dental Access Centre**

RD&E Hospital (Heavitree)  
Gladstone Road  
Exeter EX1 2ED

**Telephone: 01392 405718**

#### **Barnstaple Dental Access Centre**

Barnstaple Health Centre  
Vicarage Street  
Barnstaple EX32 7BH

**Telephone: 01271 370562**

## **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## **Have your say**

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust  
Raleigh Park, Barnstaple  
Devon EX31 4JB  
Tel. 01271 322577  
[www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk)

© Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust  
This leaflet was designed by the Communications Department.  
Tel: 01271 313970 / Email: [ndht.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.contactus@nhs.net)