



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust



Conscious sedation

– patient information

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www.uhb.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets.htm

The aim of this information sheet is to help answer some of the questions you may have about having conscious sedation for your procedure. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the healthcare professional caring for you, before the sedation is given.

What is conscious sedation?

- One of the staff members looking after you will put a cannula in one of your veins (usually in your arm or the back of your hand). Through this cannula, you will be given a small injection of a drug (sedative). The drugs are used to make you feel less anxious and more relaxed about the treatment you are about to receive.
- Although you will not go to sleep, you may think that you have been. Many people cannot remember very much about the treatment afterwards.
- During sedation your pulse and breathing will be monitored by a clip on your finger. You may be given extra oxygen to breathe.
- You will be kept in hospital until you have recovered sufficiently from the effects of the sedation.

What are the risks of conscious sedation?

- The levels of oxygen in the blood stream may fall. This is due to reduced breathing during sedation. You may be asked by the staff looking after you to take deep breaths to correct this. Your breathing level will be monitored throughout the procedure.
- Bruising at the site of the cannula. This may take several days to fade completely.
- Very rare risks:
 - Allergic reaction to the sedative drugs that you have been given
 - Vomiting
- It is very important that you let the healthcare professionals know your medical history, including any medication you are taking; if you snore loudly; if you have any problems with your breathing (particularly at night); and if you have had any problems in the past with having either a general anaesthetic or sedation.

What are the alternatives to conscious sedation?

- The main alternative to conscious sedation is a general anaesthetic where you are completely asleep during your operation. This is riskier and cannot be done if you have certain medical conditions. It is often better to avoid a general anaesthetic if the procedure is minor.
- Some procedures can be done under local anaesthetic, which means the area which needs treatment will feel numb, but you will be completely alert during the procedure. Your healthcare professional will let you know if this is possible.

How do I prepare for conscious sedation?

- You must have nothing to eat for 6 hours before your appointment time. Please do not chew gum or eat sweets during this time.
- You can drink still water up to 2 hours before your appointment (for example, for a 9:00am appointment stop drinking at 7:00am).
- Please bring a responsible adult with you. This adult must escort you home, and you must have a responsible adult to stay with you for 24 hours. If you do not have a responsible adult able to stay with you, please discuss this with your nurse or doctor before your appointment.

Emergency procedures

If you are having your procedure done as an emergency it may not be possible for you to fast for the recommended amount of time. The staff looking after your sedation will be aware of this.

Discharge advice following conscious sedation

Sedation can affect your reflexes and judgment, and you may still feel a little sleepy, confused, clumsy or dizzy. This will wear off within 24 hours.

The effects of the sedation may take some time to go away, so please follow this advice for the 24 hours following the procedure:

Do:

- ✔ Remain with a responsible adult
- ✔ Rest quietly
- ✔ Drink plenty of fluid and eat a light diet.

Do not:

- ✘ Drive a car or any other vehicles including bicycles
- ✘ Make any important decisions such as signing any legally binding documents
- ✘ Operate any machinery or appliances such as cookers or kettles
- ✘ Drink any alcohol or take other sedative medication/drugs, for example sleeping tablets
- ✘ Lock the toilet door, or make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you
- ✘ Undertake activities involving heights (including climbing ladders or onto a chair)
- ✘ Undertake sporting activities
- ✘ Be the sole carer for young children or other dependants

Ward/ department contact details (please circle)

- Emergency Department: 0121 371 2609
- Ambulatory care: 0121 371 3120
- Wellcome Short Stay Unit: 0121 371 3131/3137
- East Block Day Unit: 0121 371 8907
- Endoscopy 0121 371 3838
- Renal Unit 0121 371 3004/3275
- Coronary Care Unit 0121 371 2562
- Other (please state)

If you have concerns and are unable to speak to the department which treated you; please visit your local GP or walk-in centre, or call 111 (NHS direct). In an emergency please visit your local Emergency Department.