

Sedation (adults)

Introduction

This leaflet gives information about *sedation* in hospital, and advice for afterwards.

What is conscious sedation?

Conscious sedation is when you are given strong drugs to help you tolerate procedures by making you feel more relaxed and sleepy. This can be used in the Emergency Department (A&E) for procedures such as straightening a broken wrist. It may also be used in other situations, such as an endoscopy or a short procedure in an operating theatre, radiology or cardiology.

These drugs may be given as a liquid, as a gas that you breathe, or as a medication through a cannula (drip) placed in a vein.

Before sedation

If this is a planned procedure you should:

- Not eat for 6 hours before your procedure.
- Not drink water up to 2 hours before your procedure.
- Bring a list of any medication that you take regularly.
- Please let the doctor know if you take any:
 - Blood thinning medication e.g. clopidogrel, apixiban, warfarin
 - Diabetic medication e.g. insulin, metformin

If your procedure is a planned one and not an emergency, the doctor may change/stop these medications before your procedure.

- Tell the doctor or nurse if you take strong opiate/morphine type medication eg. Oromorph, oxycodone, MST.

Frequently asked questions

What if I feel pain during the procedure?

There will be a doctor or nurse who will be monitoring you and can give you more sedative or pain medication. Rarely, we need to give people a general anaesthetic if they cannot tolerate the procedure under sedation. If this is the case we may need to bring you back another day.

What are the benefits of sedation?

Sedation makes you more relaxed and able to tolerate procedures that might otherwise be too uncomfortable.

Will I be aware of what is going on around me? Will I remember?

Sedation is not a general anaesthetic, you will be aware of things that are going on around you and a nurse or doctor will be with you at all times. Some people cannot remember the procedure but this is variable and can depend on the type of sedation that you receive.

What are the risks of sedation?

The risks are low. Sometimes you can have too much sedation and get too sleepy; however, there are drugs that can be given to reverse your sedation. Your nurse or doctor will be with you at all times to monitor and talk to you. The doctor/nurse will discuss risks that are specific to your procedure at your appointment.

When can I go home?

Once the sedation has worn off and you are less sleepy you will be able to go home, usually within 1-2 hours. You must have somebody with you for 24 hours after sedation.

Who can I contact if I want further information?

If it is a planned procedure, please use the contact number on your booking letter for further information. After your procedure you will be given clear contact details so that you know who to contact if you are worried or concerned.

Advice following conscious sedation

It is now safe for you to be discharged home, as the strong drugs that were used have worn off enough. However, you may still feel a little confused, sleepy, dizzy or clumsy. This is not unusual, but may take some time to go away, so please follow this advice:

- Stay with friends or family for the next 24 hours.
- Avoid alcoholic drinks for 24 hours.
- Do not make any important decisions, such as signing contracts, commitments or major purchases for the next 24 hours.
- Do not undertake any activity that requires you to be alert or co-ordinated for the next 24 hours - this includes driving, operating heavy machinery or power tools, cooking, climbing or riding a bicycle.
- If you need painkillers, use those provided by the hospital or simple over-the-counter painkillers.
- If you feel sick or vomit, stick to fluids until you can tolerate solid food. If this persists, contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department (A&E).
- If a follow-up appointment is needed eg clinic, then this will be made before you leave and you will be given written confirmation of this.

Tell us your views

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your treatment and care, please speak to a senior member of staff or to the nurse looking after you. The matrons are also available during normal working hours and they welcome your views. You can also pick up a copy of the Trust leaflet called 'Talk to us', which explains how you can raise concerns or give feedback on your experience at the hospital.

Friends and Family Test

Whatever your experience you can give feedback by answering the Friends & Family test question – *How likely are you to recommend our service to family and friends if they needed similar care or treatment?* - by going online www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/friends-and-family-survey.htm.

Further information

For more information about the Trust visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

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This document can be made available in other languages and large print upon request.

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