



Why is Sedation Dentistry necessary for some patients?

It is common and perfectly normal to have some degree of apprehension or anxiety prior to receiving dental treatment. Some people, however, have stronger feelings in this regard than others. These feelings may be the result of less than pleasant past experiences, stories told by family and friends, or by the nature of the dental procedure itself (wisdom teeth removal). Dental treatment may be especially frightening to young children and patients with developmental disabilities. Whatever the cause, apprehension or anxiety can produce many unpleasant effects including heart palpitations, high blood pressure, upset stomach and trouble sleeping the night before the appointment. Many highly apprehensive patients avoid dental care for many years until their problems become so severe that they are forced to seek emergency care.

What is Sedation Dentistry?

Sedation can make practically all dental and oral surgical procedures more pleasant and safer for the apprehensive patients. During the procedure, the anxiety that many people have can be controlled by administering sedative medication. A sedated patient will not only be more relaxed but can also have potentially limited memory of the procedure performed. In either case local anesthesia (lidocaine) is also administered to block the pain sensations during the procedure and to keep the mouth numb during recovery.

How is the medication administered?

Sedative medication can be administered by breathing (nitrous oxide/laughing gas), orally (pill form) or intravenously (IV).

- **Nitrous oxide** is the most common agent used to treat apprehensive patients and can be used either by itself or in combination with Oral Sedation.
- **Non- IV conscious sedation** involves Nitrous Oxide in combination with an oral medication. Patients become very relaxed and potentially slightly sleepy but are still able to speak and answer questions. Some patients may experience an amnesic effect and don't remember much of the visit the next day. Oral medication takes time to work (approximately 30-45 minutes) and has limits on how sedated you can safely become.
- **IV sedation:** Medication given intravenously (IV) has its effect rapidly so your dentist can give the precise amount needed for your level of anxiety. In addition, if more medication is needed during the procedure, the IV allows easy administration of additional medications. Patients are generally very sleepy and may experience more amnesic effects from IV sedation than through the other previously mentioned methods.

Which type of sedation is right for me?

The route selected by you and your dentist will depend on your current health status and your particular needs.

How am I monitored during the procedure?

Depending on the depth of sedation or anesthesia being used, as well as your own medical condition, various monitors will be used during your procedure to ensure your safety. These monitors vary from automatic blood pressure cuffs to the use of pulse oximeters which, through a light sensor, measure the oxygen concentration in your blood. For our conscious and IV sedation patients, an EKG monitor is also used to monitor your heart rhythm in addition to capnography (measuring carbon dioxide levels from the breath). In addition to the monitoring devices, your doctor along with trained staff will always be with you and will be observing you closely during your treatment.

Is Sedation Dentistry safe?

The use of sedation in dentistry has a commendable record of safety. This is due to the advanced training your doctor has and her commitment to your overall health. It is important to advise your doctor of all medications that you take as well as any changes in your health since your last visit. In Texas, a special permit is required to administer sedation and anesthesia. Dr. Dillon Patel is trained in Level 2 (Nitrous and Oral conscious sedation) and Level 3 (IV Moderate sedation) and can administer IV sedation. The ability to handle emergency situations as well as having specific emergency medications and equipment is a mandatory part of the permitting process. Additionally, Dr. Dillon Patel is certified in Basic Life Support, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, and Advanced Trauma Life Support.

Source: the American Dental society of Anesthesiology

Any questions or concerns? Call to schedule an appointment at your nearest Enamel Dentistry Location.