

Sedation Guidelines

For the safety of our patients, there are several guidelines we follow when evaluating whether to sedate a patient for oral surgery.

- Patients exhibiting certain signs of illness **cannot** be sedated, including fever, productive cough or congestion, upset stomach, and other symptoms which can impair the patient's breathing or put them at risk of vomiting.
 - Patients who have been recently ill will be sedated only upon evaluation and approval by the doctor.
- Patients who are pregnant, or believe they may be pregnant, **cannot** be sedated.

Patients must observe the following guidelines prior to, and on the day of, their oral surgery.

- No eating or drinking past the midnight before surgery, not even water while brushing teeth. No alcoholic beverages within 24 hours of procedure.
 - *Why?*
 - If a sedated patient vomits during surgery it can enter the lungs and cause aspiration, a *very dangerous* situation.
 - *Exception:* Usually any regular medications can be taken with a sip of water on the day of sedation. However, all medications should be disclosed at the time of consultation to the consulting doctor, as some medications may need adjustments. If you have any questions or concerns, ask and confirm with the treating doctor.
- Loose fitting clothing, like a t-shirt, **must** be worn to expose the arms. No "one piece" outfits.
- No contact lenses, jewelry, or dentures - if present these items must be removed before surgery.
- No fingernail polish or acrylic nails. (Also, do not wear lipstick or excessive makeup.)
 - *Why?*
 - Long sleeves, contacts, and obstructed fingernails all complicate administering and monitoring sedation. Easy access to the arm for the IV, visible fingernails for monitoring oxygen, and eyes clear of foreign objects let us provide the best possible care during sedation.
- Sneakers must be worn; no flip-flops or other footwear a sedated patient might trip over.
- An adult escort must accompany the patient, who will stay during the procedure and afterwards will drive the patient home. The escort must be able to provide their full attention to the sedated patient (e.g. no accompanying infants or young children, no 'must-take' phone calls, etc). If an escort cannot be present on the day of the procedure, or during the procedure itself, the procedure/surgery **must** be rescheduled.
 - *Why?*
 - After sedation patients are allowed to recover before being discharged, but they will still be unsteady and require assistance walking. Further, they **cannot** drive while still under any lingering effects of their sedation. For this reason we *require* an escort with undivided attention to be present.
- In accordance with the above: a patient **cannot** drive a vehicle or operate any machinery for *24 hours following anesthesia*. For the same 24 hours, do not make important decisions or sign important papers, do not take sleeping pills, and do not consume alcohol.
 - *Why?*
 - The sedative agents used in the procedure affect coordination, memory, and judgment.
- **FOR MINOR PATIENTS:** A parent or court-appointed legal guardian **must** accompany the minor patient to their surgery. **Must.** A third-party consenting adult **cannot** take the place of a parent or court-appointed legal guardian. For legal guardians, our office **must** have the relevant documentation of guardianship on file.
 - *Why?*
 - For *surgeries*, **only** a parent or legal guardian has the lawful authority to provide consent for adjustments in treatment which may arise during the surgery. Therefore, even if a parent or legal guardian consents to treatment prior to the surgery, they must still be present during surgery itself.