



What is IV (intravenous) Sedation?

1. What Is Conscious Sedation

Conscious sedation is a technique used to reduce anxiety and discomfort during dental procedures. It involves medication that helps you feel calm, relaxed, and less aware of the procedure while still being able to respond to instructions. Unlike general anaesthesia, where you are completely unconscious, with conscious sedation:

- ✓ You remain awake but feel calm and very drowsy.
- ✓ You are less aware of what is happening.
- ✓ You are still able to talk and respond.
- ✓ You can breathe on your own without assistance.
- ✓ You may have little or no memory of the treatment afterward.

Sedation makes dental care easier for patients who are nervous, have a strong gag reflex, or require long and/or complex procedures.

2. How Is Sedation Given?

There are different ways conscious sedation can be given, depending on what's best for you:

- Intravenous (IV) Sedation – A small needle is placed in your arm or hand, and the sedative is given through a tube. This works

quickly, and the dentist can adjust the level of sedation during the treatment.

- Oral Sedation – A tablet is taken before the procedure, making you feel sleepy and relaxed.
- Inhalation Sedation (Laughing Gas) – A mix of oxygen and nitrous oxide is breathed in through a mask, giving a light, calming effect.

You and your dentist discussed and agreed for you to have IV sedation for your dental treatment. We will also discuss the other options at your pre-sedation assessment.

3. Is It Safe?

Yes! IV sedation is used safely by trained professionals following strict guidelines set by the Intercollegiate Advisory Committee for Sedation in Dentistry (IACSD). We take every precaution to ensure your safety and comfort and the highest standards of care.

During the procedure:

- ✓ Your breathing, heart rate, and oxygen levels will be closely monitored.
- ✓ Your sedationist will adjust the sedation if needed.
- ✓ You will always be able to breathe on your own.

4. Why Is a Medical Assessment Needed?

Before receiving sedation, we must carry out a detailed medical assessment to ensure your safety. This includes:

- ✓ A full medical history – including any conditions like heart disease, asthma, or diabetes.
- ✓ A list of medications – as some medicines may interact with sedation.
- ✓ A dental history – to understand your previous experiences and any difficulties with treatment.
- ✓ A social history – to ensure you have a responsible adult escort and a safe environment to recover at home.

If you have any health conditions, we may need to adjust the sedation or consider alternative treatment options.

5. Are There Other Options?

If IV sedation is not suitable for you, we may explore other ways to help manage anxiety and discomfort, including:

- ◆ Behavioural techniques – CBT, relaxation exercises, hypnotherapy and distraction methods.
- ◆ Local anaesthesia alone – numbing the area without sedation.
- ◆ Inhalation sedation or oral sedation – these typically produce a lighter sedation than IV sedation
- ◆ General anaesthesia (GA) – where you are fully unconscious, but this is only done in a hospital setting for complex cases.

We will discuss all available options and help you choose the best one for you.

6. How Does the Consent Process Work?

Before undergoing sedation, we will explain:

- ✓ The type of sedation you will receive.
- ✓ The risks and benefits of sedation.
- ✓ Any alternative options available to you.
- ✓ What to expect before, during, and after the procedure.

You will then be asked to sign a consent form, confirming that you understand the information and agree to proceed. This must be done before sedation, while you are fully alert.

7. Do I Need to Fast Before My Appointment?

No, you are not required to fast before your IV sedation.

Have something light to eat and drink before your appointment such as some toast and tea for breakfast or a sandwich for lunch.

8. What Should I Expect During Recovery?

After sedation, you may feel:

- ✓ Drowsy or groggy.
- ✓ A little unsteady on your feet.
- ✓ Unable to remember parts of the procedure.

It is essential that, **for 24 hours after your sedation**, you:

⊘ Do not drive, operate machinery, make important decisions or sign any documents.

⊘ Do not go back to work.

⊘ Do not drink alcohol or take recreational drugs.

⊘ Do not shop online or go on social media.

⊘ For new mothers, do not breastfeed.

✓ Rest at home and drink plenty of fluids.

✓ Follow the instructions given by your dentist.

✓ You will remain under observation until you meet discharge criteria.

9. Why Do I Need an Escort?

You must have a responsible adult to accompany you home after sedation. Your escort should:

✓ Collect you from the clinic and take you home safely.

✓ Stay with you for at least 24 hours after the procedure.

✓ Ensure you do not drive, operate machinery, or make important decisions.

If you do not have an escort, your sedation treatment cannot go ahead for safety reasons.

10. What Are the Risks and Benefits?

Benefits of Conscious Sedation:

✓ Reduces anxiety and fear, making treatment more comfortable.

- ✓ Minimises discomfort during long or complex dental procedures.
- ✓ Little or no memory of the procedure.
- ✓ Quick recovery compared to general anaesthesia.

Potential Risks (Rare but Possible):

- ⚠ Mild drowsiness, dizziness after the sedation (common)
- ⚠ Nausea or vomiting after sedation (rare).
- ⚠ Bruising at the IV site.
- ⚠ Lowered blood pressure, breathing rate, or Oxygen levels which are closely monitored.
- ⚠ Allergic reaction to the sedative drug (very rare).
- ⚠ Possible lack of cooperation under sedation where the treatment may need to be abandoned

We follow strict IACSD 2025 guidelines to ensure the highest safety standards. The sedation team is fully trained to handle any complications.

If you have any questions, please give us a call.



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