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SEDATION FAQs

If you require treatment that may be difficult, if you have anxiety or apprehension about your treatment, or if you'd like to just have a more pleasant dental experience, sedation may be a wonderful option for you.

What is sedation?

Sedation is a safe and reliable method of providing a more pleasant dental experience. Medications will be administered making you very relaxed, non-apprehensive, and sleepy; you will not be unconscious.

How is it administered?

Sedation is administered as either an oral medication, or through an IV line placed in your hand or arm. Although an oral medication may seem more desirable, this route of administration has several disadvantages:

- It takes an hour or more to take effect.
- The doctor can't tell exactly how every patient will respond to a given dose. Thus patients can be sedated too lightly or too heavily.

Many of these disadvantages are not present with IV sedation; therefore it is usually the preferred route of administration. If a patient is anxious about the IV placement, an oral medication or laughing gas (nitrous oxide) may be given until the IV is in place.

Is it safe?

Yes! Sedation is extremely safe when given by properly trained healthcare personnel. With IV sedation you will be given a very small amount of medication initially to see how you respond. The amount of medication given can then be gradually increased as needed to achieve an optimal level of relaxation. For enhanced safety, your blood pressure, pulse, blood oxygenation, and breathing will be monitored continually throughout the procedure.

Are there any special requirements?

There are a few. First, you must be at least 16 years of age and relatively healthy for sedation to be safely administered outside of a hospital setting. Any major breathing, heart, or other health conditions may not make you a good candidate.

If approved, you must not have anything to eat or drink for at least 6 hours before your procedure. You also must have an escort to take you home, as you will not be able to drive until the next day. Ideally your escort would also stay with you for at least 2 hours after your procedure to monitor your recovery.

How much does it cost?

This varies greatly depending on the type of sedation you require, if there are applicable insurance benefits, and the length of your procedure. A pre-estimate can be created on your behalf by the treatment coordinator/administrative team.