

# Having intravenous sedation for your dental treatment: Dental chair

## **IMPORTANT**

Please have a light meal prior to your appointment.  
Please take your regular medication with a small amount of clear fluid.

You must arrive on time and be escorted by a responsible/able-bodied adult who will stay until your treatment is complete and will take you home afterwards. We will not be able to proceed with your treatment unless you have a suitable escort.

Please do not bring babies or small children to this appointment.

If you have any queries, please contact the dental department, **t:** 020 7188 1810 / 4396.

**The aim of this information booklet is to help answer some of the questions you may have about having intravenous sedation for your dental treatment. It explains the benefits, risks and alternatives of the procedure as well as what you can expect when you come to hospital. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to a dentist or dental nurse caring for you.**

## **What is intravenous sedation?**

Intravenous sedation involves giving you an injection of sedative drug through a plastic tube into a vein in your arm or hand. The sedative drug will relax you and make you feel sleepy during your treatment.

Once you are sedated, you will be given a local anaesthetic injection which will numb your mouth before treatment begins.

You might find the leaflet **Treatment options** helpful as this leaflet explains the different anaesthetic and pain relief options available for your dental treatment. If you do not have one please ask your dentist or nurse.

## **What are the benefits – why should I have intravenous sedation?**

Sedation by injection will help you cope with dental treatment and reduce your anxiety. Even people who do not feel anxious about dental treatment choose to have sedation for uncomfortable procedures such as extractions (removing a tooth).

## **What are the risks?**

Intravenous sedation can slow down your breathing. We overcome this by monitoring you closely and giving you oxygen (through a mask) if needed.

Another possible complication is bruising to your hand or arm after the injection but this should only last a few days. We will speak to you about risks in more detail before you sign the consent form.

## **Asking for your consent**

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves. If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

## **Are there any alternatives?**

The alternatives to this type of sedation are local anaesthesia without sedation and general anaesthesia.

Treatment under local anaesthesia will involve an injection into the gum so that there will be no pain. But without additional sedation you will be more aware of the dental experience.

General anaesthesia is riskier and is reserved for people who are unable to cope with treatment under sedation due to disability or who need a great deal of treatment.

## How can I prepare for my appointment?

You must have a responsible adult come with you to hospital, stay until your treatment is complete, escort you home and look after you for the rest of the day. As your escort is there to look after you they must not have children with them.

Please arrive for your appointment on time as we may not be able to see you if you arrive late. It is not necessary to stop eating before sedation and we recommend that you have a light meal before your appointment.

Your medicines will be reviewed before you come in for the procedure, and you will be told if you need to stop any of them temporarily. Unless you are advised otherwise, please continue to take your routine medicines as usual. Please let your dentist or nurse know if you have allergies to any medicines.

If you have children, you will need to arrange help with looking after them until the following day. Please do not bring any children or babies to hospital with you as we do not have a suitable space for them to wait.

If you develop a cold or feel unwell before your treatment, or think you might be pregnant, please call us for advice.

## **What happens during the sedation?**

The dentist will explain the treatment planned and check that you understand what will happen. The dental nurse will take your blood pressure.

You will be asked to lie back in the dental chair and have a small, plastic tube (cannula) placed in your arm or hand. The dentist will then give the sedation slowly through this tube and encourage you to relax. The dental team will monitor your breathing throughout treatment.

## **Will I feel any pain?**

Your dentist will use local anaesthesia to numb the area where you will be having treatment. You might feel a slight stinging sensation while having the local anaesthetic injection but then the area should feel numb.

We will do our best to make sure you feel as comfortable as possible during the procedure. Please let us know if you feel any discomfort.

## **What happens after the procedure?**

At the end of treatment we will walk you to the recovery area where your escort will be waiting. You will still feel sleepy and many people are clumsy and forgetful. For these reasons you will not be able to leave hospital until you have been checked by the dentist or dental nurse.

Most people spend about 30 minutes in the recovery area. The plastic tube will remain in your arm or hand until you are fit to leave.

## **What do I need to do after I go home?**

For your safety, it is important that you follow the advice on the next page. Although you might feel fine, your reasoning, reflexes, judgement, coordination and skill can be affected by the sedation until the next day.

Please rest at home until the following day. During this time you should not:

- drive any vehicle or ride a bicycle
- operate any machinery, including domestic appliances
- attempt to cook, use sharp utensils or pour hot or boiling liquids
- drink alcohol or smoke
- take sleeping tablets
- make any important decisions or sign any contracts
- be responsible for children or other dependants.

## **Will I have a follow-up appointment?**

If you need a follow-up appointment, your dentist or dental nurse will let you know. You will either be given another appointment by the reception team or placed on the appropriate waiting list and sent a letter when an appointment is available.

## **Contact details**

If you have any questions or concerns about having sedation for your dental treatment, please contact the Dental Day Surgery Unit, **t:** 020 7188 1810, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets)

## **Pharmacy Medicines Helpline**

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline. **t:** 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

## **Your comments and concerns**

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS)      **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

## **Language and accessible support services**

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.

**t:** 020 7188 8815    **e:** [languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk)

## **NHS 111**

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 111    **w:** [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk)

## **NHS website**

Online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing.

**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## **Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust**

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, please get in touch. **t:** 0800 731 0319 **e:** [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk)

**w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership)

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