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Having sedation for a procedure

What is sedation?

Sedation is when you are given strong drugs to help you tolerate procedures by making you feel more relaxed and sleepy. This can be used in the Emergency Department (A&E) for procedures such as straightening a broken wrist. It may also be used in other situations, such as endoscopy or a short procedure in an operating theatre, radiology, dental procedures or cardiology.

These drugs may be given orally as a liquid or tablet, as a gas that you breathe, or as a medication through a cannula (drip) placed in a vein.

For more information,
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... for a **better** Bolton

Before sedation

If this is a planned procedure you should:

- Not eat for six hours before your procedure.
- Not drink water up to two hours before your procedure.
- Bring a list of any medication that you take regularly.
- If you have a CPAP machine to help your breathing, please bring it with you.

Please let the doctor know if you take any blood thinning medication (e.g. Clopidogrel, Apixaban, Warfarin) or diabetic medication (e.g. Insulin or Metformin).

If your procedure is a planned one and not an emergency, the doctor may change/stop these medications before your procedure.

Tell the doctor or nurse if you take opiate/ morphine - type medication eg. Oramorph, Morphine Sulphate modified release, Oxycodone and let the team know of any drug allergies that you have.

What if I feel pain during the procedure?

There will be a doctor or nurse who will be monitoring you and can give you more sedative or pain medication. Extremely rarely, if patients cannot tolerate the procedure under sedation, they may need to come back another day for a different plan. This may include an anaesthetic (such as a general or spinal anaesthetic).

What are the benefits of sedation?

Sedation makes you more relaxed and able to tolerate procedures that might otherwise be too uncomfortable.

Will I be aware of what is going on around me? Will I remember?

Sedation is not general anaesthetic; you will be aware of things that are going on around you and a nurse or doctor will be with you at all times. Some people cannot remember the procedure but this is variable and can depend on the type of sedation that you receive.

What are the risks of sedation?

The risks are low. People are different and some can be more sensitive to the effects of sedation than others and might become particularly sleepy with it. If this does happen, there is the option of giving medication to reduce or reverse the effects of the sedation, if necessary. Your nurse or doctor will be with you at all times to monitor and talk to you. The doctor/nurse will discuss risks specific to your procedure at your appointment.

When can I go home?

Once the sedation has worn off and you are less sleepy you will be able to go home, usually within 1-2 hours. You must have somebody with you for 24 hours after the sedation.

Advice following conscious sedation

It is now safe for you to be discharged home, as the strong drugs that were used have worn off enough. However, you may still feel a little confused, sleepy, dizzy or clumsy. This is not unusual, but may take some time to go away, so please follow this advice:

- Stay with friends or family for the next 24 hours.
- Avoid alcoholic drinks for 24 hours.
- Do not make any important decisions, such as signing contracts, commitments or major purchases for the next 24 hours.
- Do not undertake any activity that requires you to be alert or co-ordinated for the next 24 hours - this includes driving, operating heavy machinery or power tools, cooking, climbing or riding a bicycle.
- If you need painkillers, use those provided by the hospital or simple over-the-counter painkillers.
- If you feel sick or vomit, stick to fluids until you can tolerate solid food. If this persists, contact your GP or return to the emergency Department (A&E).
- If a follow up appointment is needed before you leave and you will be given written confirmation of this.