

Sedation Dentistry

Sedation dentistry can make receiving desired dental treatment much more pleasant for anyone who feels anxious about their visit. Sedation dentistry is the technique of using medication to relieve anxiety and discomfort during dental procedures. In contrast to general anesthesia where patients are completely unconscious, patients receiving sedation dentistry are semi-conscious but comfortable. For this reason, this level of sedation has also been called “twilight sleep” or “conscious sedation” in the past.

At Stadium Dental Center, sedative medications are administered through a flexible intravenous catheter (“IV”) to provide relaxation and to minimize discomfort. You will feel drowsy and may even sleep through portions of the procedure, but you will always be easily awakened when spoken to or touched. Your memory of all or portions of your procedure may be incomplete.

Although you will not be completely asleep, you will be medically monitored before, during and after your dental procedure. The dental team will closely monitor your heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, and the oxygen levels in your blood. You will wear a nasal cannula through which oxygen may be supplemented if needed, because your breathing may become slower or more shallow than normal due to sedation. After the procedure you will be observed in recovery for a short time, usually 30 minutes, as the sedation wears off prior to your being ready to leave.

There are generally no significant after-effects from this level of sedation. However, your judgment, reaction time and short-term memory may be impaired for the next 24 hours. For this reason, you must bring a responsible adult to accompany you and to drive you home. It is also recommended that you not operate dangerous machinery or equipment, make any important decisions, or sign any legal documents for the next 24 hours.

For sedation dentistry to be done safely, it is necessary that you not have any food or drink for 6 hours before the dental procedure and that you have an adult escort to ensure safe transportation home. If you arrive for your sedation dentistry appointment after having had food or drink in the 6 hours before the procedure or you come without an escort, you will not be given sedative medication. It would then be necessary to either have the dental procedure without sedation or to cancel the procedure. A cancellation fee may apply.

The regular use of alcohol or the regular use of medications such as antidepressants, muscle relaxants, sleep medications, or pain medications may decrease the effectiveness of the medications used to cause sedation. Please let a member of the team at Stadium Dental Center know if this applies to you.