

Patient information

Conscious Sedation

Emergency Care – Royal Liverpool Hospital

You have sustained an injury which requires manipulation. Your doctor advises that you receive **conscious sedation** to enable the procedure to be performed.

What is conscious sedation?

You will be given a combination of painkillers (analgesics) and sedatives to make you drowsy and control the pain. The medication can make it hard for you to remember the procedure.

The benefits of conscious sedation

You will not require a general anaesthetic which means that you will have a quicker recovery period and are more likely to be able to go home. The procedure has a higher chance of success with sedation than just pain relief alone.

The risks

Some people can fall into a deep sleep once the procedure has been performed. The most serious risk of a deeper sleep is that your breathing becomes shallow and your oxygen levels may fall. For this reason you will be continuously monitored until you fully recover.

You may feel drowsy and sickly for the first 24 hours.

Are there any alternative treatments / procedures available?

Some procedures can be undertaken without sedation, if you feel that you would not like to receive sedation then speak to the doctor in charge of your care about this.

If sedation is necessary the only alternative is a general anaesthetic which would require formal admission to hospital and in some cases can delay limb saving treatments.

What will happen if I decide not to have this done?

If you do not wish to proceed the doctor will explain your options. In most cases sedation is required to treat limb threatening emergencies. An acceptable alternative will need to be found.

What sort of medication will be given to me?

You will be given a strong (opiate) painkiller which is usually morphine or something similar. This is usually given as an injection so that it works quickly and we can ensure you receive the appropriate dose.

Opiate based painkillers can also make you feel relaxed and ease anxiety. Some people can feel sickly so they are often given with an anti-sickness medication. Their effects usually wear off within two to four hours.

You will also be given a sedating medication which makes you become sleepy. This is given as an injection and acts within a few minutes and lasts up to half an hour. Most people recover within an hour and are unable to fully remember the procedure. The risks associated are mentioned above.

Who should not have it done?

If you are unhappy about the procedure for any reason, you should not continue until you have spoken to the doctor treating you. If you have had an allergy to an anaesthetic it may not be suitable.

If you suffer with severe breathing difficulties or have a serious heart condition there may be a higher risk of complications.

If you are worried about any of these risks, please speak to your Consultant or a member of their team.

What happens afterwards?

You will be observed closely until you have fully recovered, which in most cases is within an hour of the procedure.

If no further treatment is needed you will be able to go home.

Going home

As you have received a sedative which may impair your judgement and make you feel sleepy and sickly, the doctor has advised the following:

You must have a friend or relative to take you home and have a responsible adult to stay with you for 24 hours.

For next 24 hours you must not

- Travel alone.
- Drive any vehicle eg. car, scooter or ride a motorcycle or bicycle.
- Operate machinery (including domestic appliances such as a kettle).
- Climb ladders.
- Make important decisions, sign any business or legal documents.
- Drink alcohol.
- Return to work within 24 hours of treatment. Your general health and any medicines you are taking may increase the time you need off work.

You should

- Take it easy for the rest of the day, avoid strenuous activity.
- Take your medications as usual.
- Let someone else care for anyone you usually look after, such as children or elderly or sick relatives.

Please be aware that it is an offence to drive when unfit to do so because of drugs and will probably invalidate your insurance policy.

Pain relief and medication

The nursing staff will advise you about painkillers before you leave the hospital. Please tell the nurses what painkilling tablets you have at home.

You will be given an information sheet about pain relief (PIF 983 Pain Relief).

Further Appointments

Before discharge we will book you in for our virtual fracture clinic, who will then call you within the next 72 hours and arrange an appointment to see an orthopaedic surgeon or physiotherapist.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further Information:

Emergency Department

Tel: 0151 706 2050

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2050

Or

NHS 111 Service

Tel: 111

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Review Date: May 2026

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