

Patient information

Inhalation Sedation for Children

Liverpool University Dental Hospital

Important Information for patients and escorts/carers

Please read this leaflet carefully before your child's treatment appointment. Failure to follow the instructions may mean your child's treatment has to be cancelled. If you have any queries please ask the dentist or nurse who is looking after your child. **You may also telephone us on 0151 706 5022 Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 5022.**

Many children feel anxious about having dental treatment and there are several ways in which we can help your child. One method of reducing anxiety is to give your child inhalation sedation during their treatment. As this method requires your child being able to breathe through their nose, if your child is unable to do so, due to a cold for example, please cancel the sedation appointment unless your child requires urgent dental treatment

What are the benefits of having inhalation sedation?

Sedation by breathing a sedative gas will help your child cope with dental treatment and reduce their anxiety. Even people who do not usually feel anxious about dental treatment may choose to have sedation for more difficult procedures such as extractions.

How will having dental treatment with inhalation sedation help your child?

It will help your child:

- Reduce their anxieties.
- Feel more relaxed.
- If your child suffers from gagging (retching) during dental treatment.
- If your child has a medical condition that may be made worse by being anxious.

What is inhalation sedation?

Inhalation sedation is one way in which we can help children who are anxious about dental treatment to relax. It is also called 'gas and air' or 'relative analgesia'. It involves breathing a relaxing gas mixture in and out. It is **not** a general anaesthetic.

How is my child given inhalation sedation?

Your child will breathe the gas mixture in and out through a small nasal mask (nosepiece) which sits on their nose throughout treatment.

What are the risks of having inhalation sedation?

Inhalation sedation is very safe. As your child breathes the gas they may feel dizzy or light-headed and if they feel uncomfortable they must tell the team. We will give your child pure oxygen to breathe at the end of the treatment to help them feel more alert.

Your dentist will talk to you in more detail about the risks of inhalation sedation before you sign the consent form. Please ask questions if you are uncertain.

Are there any alternatives treatments available?

The alternatives to this type of sedation are intravenous sedation, a local anaesthetic (with no sedation) or a general anaesthetic.

Intravenous sedation involves giving your child an injection of a sedative drug through a plastic tube into a vein in their arm or hand. This is usually offered to children who are 13 years old and over.

Treatment under a local anaesthetic will involve an injection into the gum so that there will be no pain during the procedure but your child will be conscious during treatment.

A general anaesthetic is medicine that causes your child to be temporarily unconscious (asleep), so they do not feel anything during the procedure. There are more risks with having a general anaesthetic and therefore is reserved for people who are unable to cope with treatment under sedation due to disability or who need a great deal of treatment.

What will happen if my child doesn't want treatment?

If your child does not have any dental treatment then the problem within their tooth will most likely worsen and could cause pain or infection. Teeth that were for fillings may then require extraction. Serious infections may need hospital treatment.

How will my child feel?

After breathing the gas mixture for a few minutes your child should begin to feel less anxious and more relaxed. They may feel warm and have a sensation of floating. They will not go to sleep and will be able to talk to us.

Once your child is comfortable and relaxed, dental treatment will be carried out in the usual way.

Once the sedation is stopped, recovery is rapid and after a short time your child will feel back to normal again.

Instructions for paediatric patients who are to receive dental treatment with inhalation sedation (relative analgesia)

Because the gas and air is breathed through the nose, any condition that blocks your child's nose will prevent the sedation from working. If your child has a cold please cancel the appointment unless they need to see the dentist urgently.

On the day of your child's sedation treatment they should:

- Take their medicines at the usual times.
- Have a light meal about two hours before their appointment.
- Be accompanied by a responsible adult, or the legal guardian if written consent is required

Before your child's sedation appointment please let us know

- About any change in their health.
- About any change in the medicines they take.
- If they are pregnant or think that they may be pregnant.
- If they are wearing contact lenses.
- About any concerns your child may have about their proposed treatment.

After inhalation sedation your child should make a full recovery within 30 minutes of their treatment.

After sedation your child should:

- Take their medications as usual.
- We recommend that you travel with your child by car or taxi- and to avoid public transport if possible.
- Rest for the remainder of the day.

Please let us know if your child cannot keep their sedation appointment. The more notice that you give us when cancelling your child's appointment; the more likely we are to use it for another patient.

If your child misses an appointment, without first cancelling it, they will be discharged back to their own dentist. If you keep cancelling your child's appointments at short notice then we are likely to request a further consultation (non-treatment) visit or may be discharged.

We always try to be helpful but we do need **your** cooperation.

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.

This is a teaching hospital and students, under supervision, may be involved in the provision of your care.

Further information

Liverpool Paediatric Dental Department

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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