

Conscious Sedation

Q: What is conscious sedation?

A: Conscious sedation is a management technique that uses medications to assist the child to cope with fear and anxiety and cooperate with dental treatment. Medications and dosages should be selected that are unlikely to cause loss of consciousness in the patient.

Q: Who should be sedated?

A: Children who have a level of anxiety that prevents good coping skills or are very young and do not understand how to cope in a cooperative fashion for the delivery of dental care should be sedated. Conscious sedation is often helpful for some children who have special needs.

Q: Why utilize conscious sedation?

A: Conscious sedation aids in allowing a child to cope better with dental treatment. This can help prevent injury to the child from patient movement and promote a better environment for providing dental care.

Q: What medications are used?

A: Many different medications can be used for conscious sedation. Your pediatric dentist will discuss different options for your child.

Q: Is sedation safe?

A: Sedation is safe when administered by a trained pediatric dentist who follows the sedation guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Your pediatric dentist will discuss sedation options and patient monitoring for the protection of your child.

Q: What special instructions should I follow before the sedation appointment?

A: In order to alleviate potential anxiety in your child, your pediatric dentist may recommend minimal discussion of the dental appointment with your child. Should your child become ill, contact your pediatric dentist to see if it is necessary to postpone the appointment. It is very important to follow the directions of your pediatric dentist regarding fasting from fluids and foods prior to the sedation appointment.

Q: What special instructions should I follow after the sedation appointment?

A: Your pediatric dentist will not discharge your child until the child is alert and ready to go. Children who have been sedated are usually requested to remain at home for the rest of the day with adult supervision. Your pediatric dentist will discuss specific post-sedation instructions with you, including appropriate diet, physical activity, and requested supervision.