

Emergency Services

Before Procedural Sedation (Adult)

Procedural sedation is when we give medicine to make you sleepy, relaxed, or calm (a sedative) while we do a medical procedure, test, or treatment. For painful treatments or procedures, we also give medicine to block the pain.

We give the procedural sedation either through a vein (intravenously) or by injecting it into a muscle (intramuscularly).

What are the risks of procedural sedation?

With any medication, there is always a risk. You might react to the medication during the procedure or as you are waking up.

During the procedure,

- Your breathing might slow down.
- Your blood pressure might get low.

As you are waking up after the procedure:

- You could feel sick to your stomach (nausea).
- You might throw up (vomit).
- You might have bad dreams.

We take steps to prevent any of these things happening and we are always ready in case they do occur.

For your safety

We assign one registered nurse to stay at your bedside before, during, and after the procedure to closely monitor you and the effects of the procedural sedation on you. The doctor is notified right away if there are any concerns.

Before we begin the procedure

- We bring emergency equipment to your bedside in case we need it.
- We bring special medicines to your bedside. If needed, we give these medicines to reverse the effects of certain sedatives and pain medicines. It is very rare that these special medicines are ever needed.
- We place a device on one of your fingers to measure the amount of oxygen in your blood at all times.

During the procedure

Every 3 to 5 minutes, the nurse checks:

- how sedated you are
- your pulse, blood pressure, and breathing rate (called vital signs)
- your oxygen level

Right after the procedure

The nurse:

- continues to closely monitor your vital signs and oxygen level
- watches you closely until you recover and fully wake up

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After Procedural Sedation (Adult)

We gave you medicines so we could do a test or procedure without you feeling pain. This is called 'sedation'. The medicines will make you feel sleepy, dizzy, faint, clumsy, or unsteady. It can also cause you to not think clearly.

You might feel the effects of these medicines for 24 hours after the procedure.

Someone should stay with you for the next 12 to 24 hours.

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if:

- You feel sick to your stomach or have been throwing up to the point where you can not eat or drink anything for 24 hours.
- You continue to feel sleepy, dizzy, faint, clumsy, or unsteady after the first 24 hours, or any of these effects get worse at any time.
- The pain medicine is not working to control your pain.

Call 9-1-1 right away if:

- You are having trouble breathing.
- Your lips or fingers are turning blue.
- The person staying with you has trouble waking you up.

How to take care of yourself at home

For the rest of today:

- Rest.
- Lie down when you feel dizzy or unsteady.
- Take pain medicines as directed by the doctor.
- If you feel sick to your stomach,
 - Drink only sips of water, apple juice, clear soup broth, or ginger ale.
 - Eat small amounts of solid food.
 - Slowly increase the amount of food so you do not upset your stomach.
- Because you will be unsteady and feel sleepy and dizzy for the first 24 hours:
 - **Do not** travel alone.
 - **Do not** drive.
 - **Do not** operate machinery.
 - **Do not** do any dangerous activities, like bike riding, swimming, or climbing ladders.
 - **Do not** make important decisions or sign important papers.
 - **Do not** drink alcohol or take sleeping pills.
 - **Do not smoke:** If you do smoke, make sure someone is with you while you smoke in case you fall asleep.