



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Dental: Oral Sedation

The dentist recommends sedation for your child. Sedation means giving your child medicine to help calm them while the dentist works on their teeth. Sedation can help your child feel less anxious, nervous or afraid, be more comfortable and stay still during the procedure.

Your child will not be put to sleep.

Each child can react differently to sedation medicine. Most children stay awake and become relaxed. Others may drift off into a light sleep but can be woken up easily. Sometimes, a child may cry or become too upset for the dentist to do the procedure.

Before the procedure

Your child will do better if you and they are prepared. You play a key role in helping your child stay calm. If you are relaxed and positive, they will be more relaxed and less afraid. You are the best person to know if your child should be told that they will be sedated or get a numbing shot. Some children will want to know. For others, knowing might scare them.

A person from the dental clinic will call you one day before to confirm the date and time of your child's appointment and review any special instructions.

If your child is sick, please call the clinic at (614) 722-5663 to reschedule the appointment. For everyone's safety, your child should not have a fever, cold, runny nose or ear infection at least 2 days before the appointment.

To prepare for the appointment:

- The night before, **do not give your child anything to eat or drink after midnight.** If they have eaten breakfast or a snack the day of the procedure, their stomach will not empty and the procedure will be rescheduled.

On the day of the appointment:

- If your child takes prescription medicine, they may take it with a sip of water, 2 hours before coming to the clinic.
- Your child may bring a special stuffed toy or blanket to help calm them.

- If you must bring other children to the appointment, get another adult to watch them so that you can give your child your full attention.
- If you drive to the appointment, bring another adult with you. One will drive and the other can watch your child in the car on the ride home.

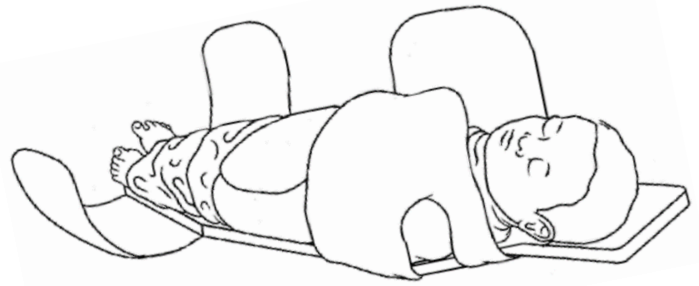
The day of the procedure

When you arrive at the dental clinic, you will go through these steps:

1. A person at the front desk will ask for your picture ID (identification) and insurance information and ask you to sign a consent form. They will then print an ID bracelet for your child to wear.
2. A dental assistant will:
 - Weigh your child before taking both of you to a private room. The rest of your child's visit will be in this room.
 - Take your child's vital signs. They will record their blood pressure and heart rate (how fast the heart beats). A pulse oximeter will be used to measure the amount of oxygen in the blood. Vital signs are a way to evaluate your child's health. They will be checked every 5 minutes during the procedure and then before you leave.
3. The dentist will then come in and:
 - Listen to your child's heart and lungs and look in their mouth.
 - Ask about your child's health and family history. Some important things to know are:
 - Has your child been ill from a cold, flu or other illness in the past week?
 - Do they have a history of breathing, heart, bleeding or other problems?
 - Do they have any allergies?
 - What medicines does your child take, including herbal remedies and vitamins?
 - Does your child have periods and are they sexually active? If so, they will get a pregnancy test because some medicines can harm an unborn baby.
 - Explain which sedation medicine will be used and give it to your child. Sometimes you will help give the medicine.
 - It will be a liquid, drunk from a cup or squirted into the mouth or a pill.
 - Sometimes a nasal spray is used for very quick procedures.
4. After your child gets sedation medicine:
 - You will go to the lobby and wait until the dentist finishes the procedure.
 - Sedation medicine takes 15 to 45 minutes to work. It can cause your child to be:
 - sleepy, dizzy, unsteady, clumsy
 - hyperactive, excited, irritable

– forgetful and not remember details of the dental visit

- Their gums and teeth will also be numbed. Even with sedation and numbing medicines, it is common for a child to cry, be upset or show anger.
- They may be fussy, not stay still or harm themselves or others during the procedure. They may be wrapped in a papoose board or blanket (Picture 1) for safety.



Picture 1 The papoose board protects your child while the dental work is being done.

5. When the dentist finishes the procedure:

- You will come back into the room while your child recovers. They will be drowsy for a while, often for 30 minutes to an hour.
- The dental assistant will check your child's vital signs before you go home.

Instructions for home

It is normal for your child to feel sleepy for the rest of the day. For safety, have your child:

- Rest, nap or sleep on their side or back with their chin tilted up. Avoid any rough activity, like playing, running and sports for the rest of the day.
- Be careful not to bite, scratch or injure their lip, cheek or tongue until normal feeling comes back. The numbing feeling can last for 2 to 4 hours.
- Start to drink cool, clear fluids, like water, broth or diluted 100% apple juice.
- Eat light and soft foods, like yogurt or applesauce. Avoid spicy and hard foods, like pizza. Rinse mouth with water after eating but do not spit.
- Not use straws or put hard things in the mouth until the gums have healed.
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®) for pain, as needed. Read the label on the bottle to know the right dose for the age of your child. Do not give aspirin or any medicine for adults.

When to call the dentist

Call the dentist if your child:

- Has problems swallowing, will not drink for 4 hours or more or looks very sick.
- Complains of mouth or jaw pain after 2 days, you see any swelling or your child has a fever over 102° F (38.9° C).

Call 911 or go to the emergency department for problems breathing or waking up.