Preparing for Your Child's Sedation Visit

Patient: _____ Sedation appointment: _____ at _____AM/PM

We have recommended sedation for your child's safety and comfort during the next dental appointment. Sedation can help reduce anxiety and discomfort during dental treatment. We choose the medicines to sedate your child based on your child's health, anxiety level, and treatment plan. It may require up to an hour after taking medicines before your child is calm and ready for dental treatment. The goal of sedation is to help children become relaxed and/or drowsy. We do not intend for them to be unconscious, but they may drift into a light sleep from which they can be awakened easily. Some children, however, react differently and become agitated. Such a response may prevent us from completing the dental procedures. Our staff will observe your child's response to the medications and assist as needed.

You, as parent/legal guardian, play a key role in your child's dental care. Children often pick up on a parent's anxiety which makes them more fearful. They are more confident when their parents understand what to expect and prepare them for the experience in a supportive way. If you have any questions about the sedation or the dental treatment your child needs, please ask.

For your child's safety, you **must** follow the instructions below.

Prior to your child's sedation appointment

- Safety is our priority. Please notify our office of any change in your child's health and/or medical condition. Fever, ear infection, breathing problems, or recent head injury could lead to complications with sedation. If your child becomes ill during the 2 weeks before the sedation appointment, contact our office to see if it is necessary to postpone the sedation.
- Be sure to tell us about any medicines your child is taking. This includes both prescribed and over-the-counter medications and supplements. We will let you know if you should give your child these medicines on the day of the sedation. Also, it is important for you to let us know about any allergies or reactions to medications that your child has had.
- To help keep your child from getting nauseated or vomiting during treatment, you will need to limit food and liquids before the sedation. An empty stomach decreases the risk of vomiting and inhaling vomit into the lungs, a potentially life-threatening problem. We must cancel the appointment if you do not follow these important instructions.

TYPE OF FOOD / LIQUID	DO NOT EAT/DRINK WITHIN
Clear liquids: water, fruit juices without pulp, carbonated beverages, clear tea, black coffee	2 hours before sedation
Human milk	4 hours before sedation
Infant formula, nonhuman milk, and light meal (toast and clear liquid)	6 hours before sedation

- Dress your child in loose-fitting, comfortable clothing. This will let us place monitors to check your child's response to the medications and help ensure your child's safety. These monitors measure your child's breathing, heart rate, and blood pressure.
- Try not to bring other children to this appointment so you can focus your attention on your child undergoing the sedation.
- If you will be going home in a car or if you must bring any other children with you to this appointment, please plan to have 2 adults on the ride home. One adult should observe the child's breathing without any distractions, especially if the patient falls asleep while in the car or safety seat.

During the sedation appointment

- Before your child is taken to the treatment room, we will ask you to watch your child closely as sedated patients may become sleepy, dizzy, unsteady, uncoordinated, or irritable. You will need to stay beside your child to prevent injuries from stumbling/falling. Keeping your child calm and sitting with you often is helpful.
- You, as the child's parent/legal guardian, must remain at the office throughout the sedation appointment. You may not leave the office for any reason. Please plan accordingly.

- The doctor and staff will be sure your child is responsive and stable before you are cleared to leave. Children recover from effects of sedatives at different rates so be prepared to stay at our office until the doctor has determined your child is ready to go and the after-effects are minimal. Your child will be awake but may be drowsy, crying, or fussy.

After the sedation appointment

- Once discharged, you should take your child directly home, not to daycare or school. Safety belts should fit securely around your child but not restrict your child's airway and breathing or the ability to be carefully observed.
- Your child will still be drowsy and requires adult supervision until fully recovered from the effects of the sedation. If your child wants to sleep, position your child on either side with the head supported and the chin up. Although sleepy, your child should be easy to wake up. During this period, check your child's breathing and airway every 3 to 5 minutes. If your child is snoring, reposition the head until the snoring stops and your child breathes normally. If breathing becomes abnormal or you are unable to arouse your child, immediately contact emergency services (call 911 or _____).
- Nausea and vomiting are common side effects of sedation. If vomiting occurs, immediately clear the material from your child's mouth. Once again, be sure that breathing is normal. If breathing becomes abnormal or you are unable to arouse your child, immediately contact emergency services (call 911 or _____). If vomiting continues for 20 to 40 minutes, contact our office without delay.
- Your child may be drowsy and uncoordinated for the rest of the day. Please limit your child to quiet activities with adult supervision. Do not allow activities where balance is important such as bike riding, swimming, using playground equipment, or climbing stairs.
- In addition to the sedative, we often use a local anesthetic to numb the mouth during dental treatment. The numbness usually lasts 2 to 4 hours. Watch to see that your child does not bite, scratch, or injure the cheek, lips, or tongue during this time.
- Children may be irritable after treatment. If this occurs, stay with your child and provide a calm environment. If you believe the fussiness is due to discomfort, you may give your child ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) or acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Follow the instructions on the bottle for dosing based upon your child's age/weight.
- When your child is alert, offer sips of clear liquids to prevent dehydration. Encourage multiple small sips rather than large gulps. Do not let your child use a straw if any teeth were extracted. The first meal should be light, bland, and easy to digest (eg, apple sauce, soup, gelatin). Do not give fatty or spicy foods (eg, milk, cheese, yogurt, French fries, tacos, salsa).
- A slight fever (temperature up to 100.5 °F) is not unusual after sedation. You may give your child ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) or acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Follow the instructions on the bottle for dosing based upon your child's age/weight. Dehydration may cause a slight increase in temperature, and drinking clear fluids may help correct this condition. If a higher fever develops or the fever continues, call our office.
- If we prescribe your child any medicines to take after the visit, please get the prescription filled promptly and give your child the medication exactly as directed.
- Please feel free to call the office for any questions or concerns you have.
- Additional instructions: _____

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Contact numbers: Office: _____ After hours: _____