

Patient Instructions for Nitrous Oxide and/or Oral Sedation

BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT:

- I. Dietary restrictions:**
 - For **oral sedation**: MANDATORY no solids for six hours prior to appointment. Clear liquids (water, juice, sports drinks, plain tea, black coffee) up until 2 hours before.
 - For **nitrous oxide** only: RECOMMENDED to avoid heavy meals as this may increase the risk of nausea and vomiting.
 - If special circumstances prevent safe fasting (e.g. diabetes/hypoglycemia), please inform the doctor/staff.
- II. Sleep:** Proper rest the night before the appointment is helpful for a smoother, less painful procedure. Please try to get around 8 hours of sleep.
 - Take 25-50 mg diphenhydramine (Benadryl) available without a prescription the evening before to promote restful sleep and to dry up oral secretions.
- III. Transportation:**
 - For **oral sedation**: mandatory to have a designated adult driver. No Uber/Lyft/etc allowed.
 - For **nitrous oxide**: no extra arrangements required
- IV. Clothing:** Please wear comfortable and loose-fitting clothing. Warm clothing is suggested due to cold office temperatures and increased shivering sometimes associated with anesthesia.
- V. Medications:**
 - Do NOT skip any regular medications unless directed by a physician or dentist!
 - MUST notify the dentist of all drugs and medications taken and any changes in medications. Drug interactions may be dangerous or life-threatening.
- VI. Health Changes:** Please reschedule if patient is sick or unable to breathe freely through his/her nose. Ideally, please wait about 3-4 weeks after cold symptoms resolve to ensure clear airways.
- VII. What to expect during the appointment:**
 - Nitrous oxide gas and oral sedation are considered *minimal to moderate* sedation techniques and are NOT intended for the patient to lose consciousness or be “put to sleep” during the procedure, though sometimes a very calm and relaxed patient might fall asleep on their own.
 - The patient will enter a drug-induced altered mental and physical state. He/she may experience drowsiness, reduction in anxiety, possible amnesia, and confusion.
 - The patient should still be semi-conscious and able to respond to commands.
 - Sedation does NOT always work on everyone. Some patients with extreme anxiety or high drug tolerance may have poor responses and may require deeper sedation, additional visits, and/or referral to outside anesthesia facilities.

VIII. For parents:

- **Behavior:** Some children may cry, fuss, or move during treatment. This might be alarming to some parents, but please remember that the child is in a drug-induced state. He/she will be numbed to avoid physical pain. Most children do not remember much due to amnesia from the medications given and will not be traumatized. (If you would prefer deeper I.V. sedation, please ask the dentist/staff for referral information.)
- **Protective stabilization:** If required, the papoose board may be used with consent to physically restrain a child during the procedure. This is to protect the patient, staff, and dentist from sudden movements and allows the procedures to be completed safely.
- Only ONE parent is allowed in the treatment room. Please avoid speaking directly to the patient while the dentist is working as this may confuse the child and interfere with the procedures.
- Please do not bring other children to the appointment.

AFTER THE APPOINTMENT:

NITROUS OXIDE GAS by itself has an effect ONLY while it is being actively inhaled by the patient. After the nose piece is removed, the patient will quickly return to a normal state within just a few minutes. No additional precautions are required. The only side-effect sometimes reported with nitrous oxide is nausea or dizziness, in which case anti-nausea medication can be administered.

ORAL SEDATION:

- I. **Activity** - Please limit activity immediately after the appointment and get plenty of rest to allow for proper healing. Sedation drugs can make the patient feel dizzy, clumsy, or uncoordinated, resulting in increased risk of physical injury. Children must be actively supervised for the remainder of the day. Please maintain an open airway especially in car seats or while sleeping by tilting the chin/jaw up and forward, since sedation medication can slow down respiration.
- II. **Fluid Intake & Diet** - Drink plenty of fluids and high-calorie drinks to rehydrate and give nutrients. (Ex. healthy milkshakes, smoothies, protein drinks.) If patient is numb, please stick to soft foods that don't require too much chewing until the anesthesia wears off completely.
- III. **Side Effects** - It is common to feel dizziness, lack of coordination, nausea, pain, swelling, foggy memory or amnesia, and fatigue. TAKE IT EASY!
- IV. **Medications** - If prescriptions were given, please follow exactly as directed and alert us if you have any bad reactions. If you were not given prescriptions, take over-the-counter pain medication such as Tylenol or Advil/ibuprofen/Motrin as directed for pain, fever, or swelling. While still numb, take pain medications right away so that they will already be in the system when the anesthetic wears off.
- V. **For Parents** - Sedation medications cause amnesia, so please provide positive reinforcement or just avoid talking about the dental visit to allow the child to forget about any potential fear/bad memories associated with the dentist.
- VI. **EMERGENCY CONTACT** - If you feel that you or your child is experiencing an unusual reaction, please contact us right away by phone (281)678-8344 or visit our website www.AutumnFamilyDentistry.com/contact for after hours.