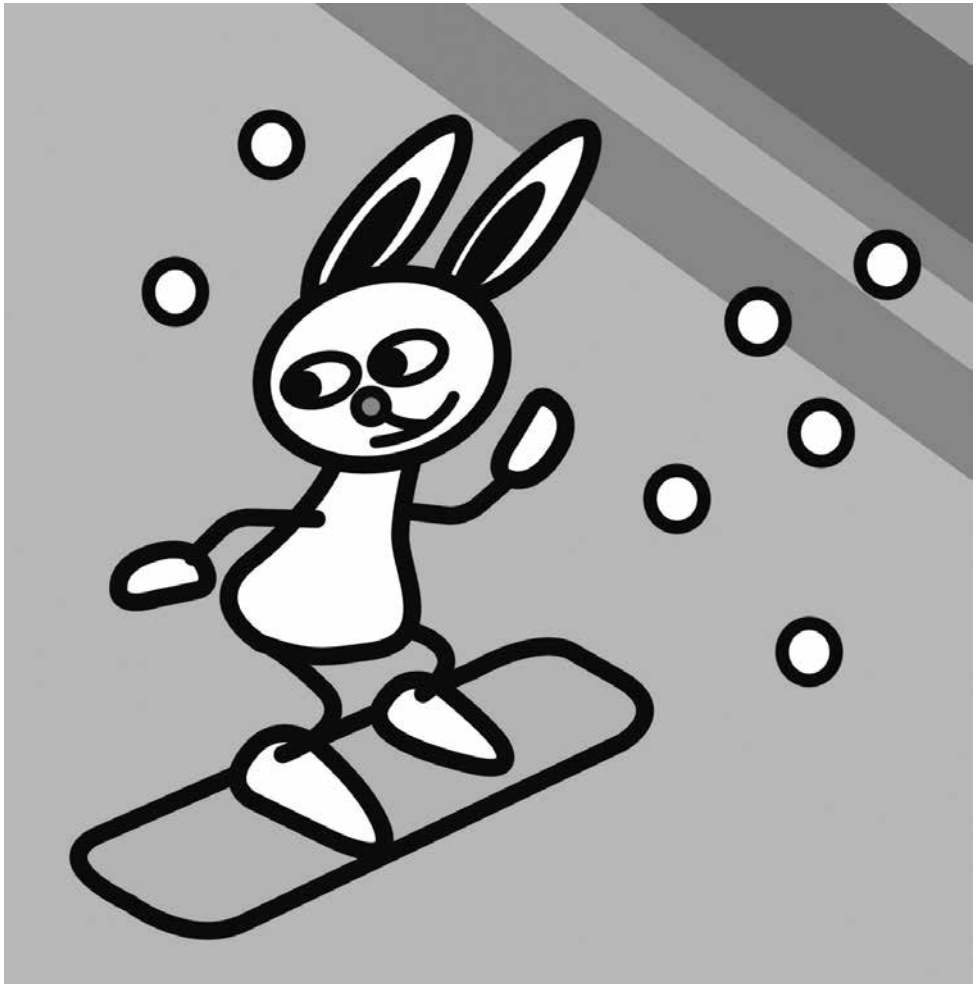


The Children's Hospital, Oxford

# Sedation for clinical procedures

Information for parents and carers



## What is sedation?

Sedation can help your child by reducing anxiety before and during a clinical procedure, through its amnesic (not remembering what happened) and relaxing effects. It can also be used to help us carry out a procedure where your child will need to keep very still.

In addition, some painful procedures can be performed using sedation, which can be given as well as simple painkillers or local anaesthetic cream (magic cream).

## How is sedation given?

Sedation can be given in the following ways:

- as liquid medicine to swallow
- as buccal medicine (rubbed into the inside of the cheeks)
- as a gas to breathe, called Entonox (laughing gas). Entonox is not suitable for all children.

Occasionally it is given into a vein using a needle and a small tube called a cannula.

The sedation given will depend on your child's age, current health and the procedure to be carried out.

## Preparation for sedation

Your child will need to be fasted (starved) before the sedation, as if they are having an operation. Sedation has to be given on an empty stomach. This is because if your child becomes very sleepy after taking the sedation medicine, there is a risk that any food or drink in their stomach might come back up and get into their lungs. This could cause problems with their breathing. You will be given specific fasting instructions to follow before your child comes in for the procedure.

On the day, you and your child will have an opportunity to talk to the Nurse and Play Specialists about what will happen.

## Fasting instructions

### **PAEDIATRIC FASTING GUIDELINES FOR SEDATION AND ANAESTHESIA**

#### **Children under one year**

- Clear fluids up to 2 hours before the procedure.
- Breast milk up to 3 hours before the procedure.
- Formula milk up to 4 hours before the procedure.
- Solids and cow's milk up to 6 hours before the procedure.

#### **Children over one year**

- Clear fluids up to 2 hours before the procedure.
- All milk and solid **food** up to 6 hours before the procedure.

## What are the benefits of sedation?

- To reduce fear and anxiety.
- To help control pain.
- To help keep your child very still during the procedure.

## What are the risks of sedation?

**Sedation can have some side effects. Children can react differently to the sedation medicine:**

- Some children may become over sedated and sleepy.
- Some children may become hyperactive.
- Rarely, the sedation does not work.

## Why sedation might not be recommended

**Sedation may not be recommended if:**

- Your child is unwell on the day of the procedure.
- Your child has chest or breathing problems.
- Your child has sleep apnoea.

## Are there any alternatives?

It may be possible to carry out the procedure without sedation, by using play distraction and explanation.

If sedation is not suitable for your child on the day, they may need a general anaesthetic for the procedure instead. A general anaesthetic means that they will be completely asleep during the procedure. This might mean they need to come back on another day. You will have an opportunity to discuss this before the procedure.

## Consent

We will need your verbal consent for the sedation to be given.

If there is anything you are unsure about, or if you have any questions, please ask before giving consent.

## What happens during the procedure?

Your child will be assessed when they arrive by a Doctor or Advanced Nurse Practitioner. They will check your child is well and they are fit to have sedation.

Your child will also have their temperature, weight, heart rate and breathing rate (vital signs) measured.

Your child will be monitored carefully as soon as the sedative medicine is given, until their recovery after the procedure.

## After your child has had sedation

After having sedation your child will need more supervision than usual. For the next 12-18 hours we advise that you supervise your child while walking or crawling, as the sedation may leave them wobbly and a little uncoordinated.

The sedative effects should have worn off by the next morning, but your child may feel more tired than usual for the next day or so.

On the journey home, we recommend that an adult sits in the back seat of the car with your child, so that they can be watched at all times.

Your child can eat and drink as they want to. It is a good idea to offer small frequent amounts of food and drink, as your child will have fasted for some time before the procedure.

It is best not to give any further sedation medicine for at least 24 hours. If your child normally takes any medication, check the information on the bottle to see whether it has a sedative effect. If so, or you are unsure, seek advice from the Nurse or Doctor at the hospital about whether the medicine should be given. A painkiller (such as paracetamol syrup/Calpol) may be given, if required.

The hospital experience is strange and unsettling for some children, so do not be surprised at changes in their behaviour when you get home. Your child may be more clingy, easily upset or have disturbed sleep. Try to be patient, understanding and give your child a bit more time.

## Signs to look out for

**If you find that you are unable to wake your child or you are concerned about them, please do not hesitate to contact the hospital on the numbers at the back of this leaflet.**

**If you are very concerned about your child, take them to your nearest hospital Emergency Department or phone 999.**

Your child was given .....

at .....

## How to contact us

### **Children's Day Care Ward:**

Tel: **01865 234 148**

(7.30am to 7.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Outside of the hours, you can contact:

Robin's Ward: **01865 231 254/5**

Melanie's Ward: **01865 234 054/55**

Tom's Ward: **01865 234 108/9**

Bellhouse Drayson: **01865 234 049**

Kamran's Ward: **01865 234 068/9**

Horton General Hospital Children's Ward: **01295 229 001/2**

All of these wards are 24 hours, 7 days a week.

### **Oxford University Hospitals Switchboard:**

Tel: **0300 304 7777**

## Further information

You can find further information on the following websites:

**<https://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/sedation-in-children-and-young-people>**

The Royal College of Anaesthetists (2014) 'Your child's general anaesthetic; information for parents and guardians of children'

London: RCOA

[www.rcoa.ac.uk](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk)

## **Please bring this leaflet with you on the day of your child's admission.**

We hope this information is useful to you and welcome any comments about the care or information you have received.

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **[PALS@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@ouh.nhs.uk)**

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