



Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise

Inhalation Sedation - Referral Guidelines

Version 2.0

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Guidelines for Referral for Inhalation Sedation

- The effectiveness of Inhalation sedation is much less predictable than intra-venous sedation or general anaesthetic
- Inhalation sedation is an adjunct to behavioural management as opposed to a pharmaceutical 'magic bullet'
- Inhalation sedation can sometimes be very useful as a way of preventing patients who need a small number of extractions from having to have a GA
- Inhalation sedation is useful for orthodontic extractions (which are not sufficient or acceptable reason to give a child a GA)
- Inhalation sedation can be a useful way to acclimatise very anxious patients in order that they accept simple treatments

Indicators for referral for inhalation sedation

Patients can be referred for sedation if:

- They require extraction of 1 – 4 teeth for orthodontic reasons, or
- They require extraction of 1, 2 or occasionally 3 teeth because they are unrestorable, or
- The patient needs extra support to allow them to accept restorative treatment, or
- The patient is accepting of restorative treatment and local anaesthesia but you feel they require extra support to cope with extraction.

Contra- indications to inhalation sedation

Please do not refer for sedation if:

- The patient does not have the mental/verbal ability to comprehend the process (age or other reasons), or
- Requires multiple (more than 3) extractions for caries, or
- Is in acute pain with a swelling

Advice to patients

If you refer for sedation, PLEASE

- Do NOT tell the patient to be starved – patients should have a light breakfast/lunch at their usual time
- Do NOT tell the patient/parent they will go to sleep – patients should be told that the first appointment is likely to be for an assessment and that they will remain conscious throughout any future treatment appointments.
- Do NOT suggest it is in anyway similar to GA – the patients should be told that the procedure will help them find dentistry more enjoyable.

PLEASE NOTE

All child patients referred for general anaesthesia (who are by definition high risk for caries) should have ALL carious teeth removed at GA, to avoid the risk of subsequent need for GA.