



Sedation in the Emergency Department

Children and youth sometimes need sedation for a test or treatment in the ED. This means giving patients medication to control pain and anxiety during a test or treatment. After receiving sedation, patients usually look like they are asleep, and aren't aware of their surroundings.

Getting Ready for Sedation

To prepare for sedation, we will:

- Check your child or teen for any medical problems, allergies and past anesthetics or sedations
- Start an IV (intravenous) for the medication. We can use a cream or freezing spray to numb the skin.



Patients must have an empty stomach for 4-6 hours before sedation. Please make sure your child or teen does not eat or drink from now until the procedure is over.



What happens during the procedure?

Most procedures last 15-30 minutes. During the procedure, we will monitor your child or teen closely. We will check and record your child's heart rate, blood pressure, breathing and oxygen level.

Sedation medications can sometimes affect your child's breathing. We watch your child's breathing carefully and are ready to help right away if needed. If breathing problems happen, they usually last only a few minutes.

Sedation Medications

- Ketamine:**
 - Makes patients sleepy and forget what happened
 - Is a good pain reliever
 - Is used most often for sedation
- Propofol:**
 - Is a strong sedative
 - Can be used alone or with Ketamine
 - It works quickly and wears off quickly
- Midazolam:**
 - Makes patients sleepy and forget what happened
 - Is usually used with another medication
- Fentanyl:**
 - Is a pain medication
 - Is usually used with another medication



After sedation

When children and youth wake up from sedation they may:

- Be confused.
- Have blurry vision.
- Be agitated and upset. This will get better quickly.
- Throw up. If vomiting continues, we may give some medications to help.



Teens should not drive any motorized vehicle for 24 hours after receiving sedation.

Going Home

Your child is ready to go home when he is awake and able to drink. This recovery time is usually 1-2 hours. For the drive home, arrange to have another adult in the car to sit beside your child and watch her while you drive.

Caring for your child at home

Diet: Ease your child or teen into a regular diet slowly. Your child may feel nauseated the day after sedation. Start with clear fluids like ginger ale, water, apple juice or popsicles. If there is no vomiting, you can try light foods like soup, toast or cereal. Breast feed or bottle feed your baby as usual.

Activity: Your child or teen can go back to regular activities after 24 hours, unless restricted by an injury.

Effects of sedation: Children and youth may be sleepy and unsteady. They may also be a little grumpy, tearful or get upset easily. They may have nightmares or difficulty sleeping for up to a week after the sedation.

Come back to the ED if your child has:

- Trouble breathing
- Difficulty waking up
- A change in skin colour (very pale or blue)
- Repeated episodes of vomiting

Questions?

CHEO Emergency Department:

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