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CONSCIOUS SEDATION

What Is It?

Conscious sedation is an altered state of consciousness, where you become disassociated with your surroundings. Memory, anxiety levels, and perception of pain are greatly reduced, and you become very relaxed and comfortable. For example, most people having conscious sedation “think” they have been asleep because they cannot remember anything that went on from the time sedation was started to the time they left the office.

How Is It Different From Being Asleep?

“Being asleep” for dental treatment is called general anesthesia. It differs from conscious sedation in many ways. First of all you are unconscious and your reflexes are diminished considerably, to the point where you must have someone breathe for you through a tube placed down your windpipe. Secondly, the drugs used are very potent and may have undesirable side effects during and after the procedure. Complications tend to increase the longer you are asleep, and you may wind up very nauseous afterwards. This adds up to more risk and considerably more personnel to monitor you during and after the procedure. For this reason, it is usually done in a hospital setting where proper support is available.

Who Is It For?

Any reasonably healthy person can have conscious sedation with ANY dental procedure, whether it is having your teeth cleaned, basic fillings, more complicated crown or cosmetic work, and/or surgery.

How Will I Feel?

Essentially you are awake, but you will remember very little and feel no discomfort. What you do recall will not be unpleasant. For example, most people do not recall or feel any part of the procedure, including numbing the teeth.

When your appointment is over, the effects of the sedatives may last for several hours and you may be groggy most of the day of your appointment, however, the sedatives will not make you sick to your stomach.

How Is It Done?

Most of the time the sedatives are administered intravenously. This way Dr. Hilton can be sure you receive the right amount of sedation. Often, oral pre-medication is given to help relax you before your appointment, and may be prescribed for you to take the night before.

Because you may feel groggy, it's important to have someone available to take you home from the office on the day of your appointment.

Is It Safe?

Yes, but it is very important that you let us know about any and all medications you are taking (including alcohol) and any medical problems that you may have had so that the sedation procedure can be altered to reflect your special needs. For some, a consultation with your physician will be helpful in preventing unanticipated problems.

Questions?

If you have any further questions about the sedation procedure please do not hesitate to call our office.