

# Pediatric Sedation

## Preparation for Children and their Families



### What is Sedation ?

Sedation is used to help many children through various tests and procedures by giving medicine to help a child relax and remain still. If the procedure is painful, medicine to relieve pain may also be given. When children are sedated, they appear to be sleeping.

### Before a Procedure with Sedation

You can expect to be contacted by a sedation nurse the evening before your appointment to be given instructions regarding food and drink restrictions.

- Restrictions to your child's diet before a sedated procedure are as follows:

| Time Frame Before Appointment | Restriction                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 hours before                | Stop all solid foods.<br>Stop liquids you cannot see through (this includes milk and formula). |
| 4 hours before                | Stop breast milk.                                                                              |
| 2 hours before                | Stop all clear liquids (including water, apple juice or Pedialyte)                             |

- Having an empty stomach before sedation is very important for your child's safety. Your child's appointment will be rescheduled if you have not followed the specified restrictions.
- Dress your child in comfortable clothing and try to avoid metal snaps, buttons, zippers, and glitter/gem designs. Girls should not wear eye make-up or mascara. These materials can interfere with some procedures performed under sedation. If necessary, your child will be asked to change into a hospital gown prior to the procedure.

### The Sedation Team at Comer Children's Hospital

- The sedation team is a group of critical care doctors and nurses who work together to deliver sedation medication and safely monitor your child if sedation is needed for a test or procedure. This team will also assist with any IV access or blood draws that may be needed.
- A Child Life Specialist is available to provide preparation for your child's test or procedure and distraction to minimize anxiety. If you would like to request child life services during your visit, please ask our staff to page the specialist.

### What Will Happen When Your Child Comes for Sedation?

- Upon arrival, you will check in at the reception desk. The nurses will call you from the waiting room when your child is ready to be seen. You are welcome to bring a favorite toy or activity to provide comfort throughout your child's appointment.
- Prior to giving the sedation medication, the sedation team will:
  - Weigh your child on a scale.
  - Ask questions regarding your child's medical history
  - Place special stickers on your child's chest & finger to safely monitor heart rate & oxygen level.
  - Take your child's blood pressure on either the arm or leg.
- The sedation team will use an I.V. to give your child sedation medication.

- The I.V. will be placed using the following steps:
  - A stretchy rubber band (called a “tourniquet”) will be tied around your child’s arm to help the nurses look for a vein (or blue line under the skin). This rubber band will feel like a tight hug on your child’s arm.
  - A soft, wet sponge to clean the skin.
  - Special “freezy” spray. This spray feels very cold but helps make the pinch easier.
  - Buzzy vibrating distraction may be available to help alleviate pain.
  - A small needle to put a tiny tube into your vein. Remember the cold spray and/or Buzzy will help make this easier and the needle will come out right away.
  - Sticky tape to hold the small plastic tube in place after the needle comes out.
- Your child can choose to watch or look away during the I.V. Some kids like to talk with someone or look at a special toy for distraction.
- You can remain with your child until he/she is asleep from the sedation medication. Your child will become sleepy within approximately 15 minutes.

### **What Will Happen After Your Child’s Procedure?**

- When your child wakes up he/she will be offered juice and crackers/cookies. If your child has unique diet restrictions, please feel free to bring snacks and a drink with you.
- Your child will be required to eat and drink a small amount and walk a short distance prior to leaving.
- Most children are sleepy and not steady on their feet for the rest of the day. Your child will require adult supervision and should not return to school or extracurricular activities until the following day.

### **General Preparation Guidelines Based on Age:**

- Research shows that children who are prepared in advance are less anxious and better able to cooperate during medical exams and procedures.
- You can help your child feel prepared by answering questions using clear and honest answers based on the detail provided here.
- We recognize that all children are individuals. You know your child best and can use this information as a guideline when preparing him/her.

#### **Child’s Age:**

2 years  
3-5 years  
6-10 years  
11 and older

#### **When to Prepare Your Child:**

On the way to your appointment  
The day before your appointment  
A few days before  
Approximately a week or two prior

### **Children With Special Needs:**

- If your child has special health needs, please let us know so we can better plan for your visit. If he/she is followed by a special doctor for the lungs, heart, kidneys, ear/nose/throat (ENT) or has diabetes, please contact us at 773-834-8585. We will make special arrangements for him/her.

Child Life Specialists are available to help prepare and support your child.

**Please call Child Life at 773-702-1230 for assistance or visit us online for more information:**

<http://www.uchicagokidshospital.org/specialties/child-life/>