

ANAESTHETIC CHOICES FOR ORAL SURGERY AND PERIODONTOLOGY

PATIENT INFORMATION

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No anaesthesia

This would only be appropriate for very superficial treatments such as professional mechanical plaque removal above the gum, commonly referred to as scaling. You will feel vibration and water-spray, and the occasional tiny bit of sensitivity that most patients readily tolerate with no concerns.

Summary

- No numbness
- For superficial treatment only

Local anaesthesia

Administered by dentists, hygienists, and therapists, this involves a series of small scratches that are placed in your gum ahead of the procedure. It literally takes seconds to administer following which patients feel absolutely no pain whatsoever throughout the procedure. They are however aware of pushing and pressure, but no pain. Unlike dentistry, that involves numbing of teeth only, oral surgery and gum disease treatment requires the bone around the teeth to be numbed as well, therefore the type of anaesthesia is similar, but also slightly different.

Unlike in dentistry, the topical anaesthetic cream is useless for anaesthesia required for oral surgery and periodontology.

For upper teeth, a little numbness in the roof of the mouth is required and unfortunately the placement of this is sharp, but it is very quick. Once the numbness takes effect, patients are surprised on how it feels different and occasionally state that there is a swelling or that they can't breathe or swallow. This is most certainly NOT the case and once reminded that everything is working as normal, only they can't feel it working as normal, patients are very quickly reassured and continue to function perfectly normally.

Numbness to the lower jaw causes a change of sensation to the lower lip on one side such as tingling. Patients sometimes report that their lip is swollen but once proven to them with a mirror that it most definitely isn't, they are reassured that this is only numbness.

Summary

- Small scratches
- Administered by dentists, hygienists, and therapists
- Numbness means no pain but still aware of pushing and pressure

Inhalation Sedation

Administered by dentists, hygienists, and therapists with additional training, this is a gas that's administered through a mask over your nose. It breaks down anxiety and you will feel very relaxed. It also has an additive pain killing effect. Patients choosing this are most comfortable throughout the dental or surgical procedure. It lasts for as long as the gas remains on. It is sometimes referred to as "laughing gas".

Summary

- Administered by dentists, hygienists, and therapists
- Goes through a mask over your nose
- Awake but very relaxed and some additional pain control effects too

Moderate Conscious Sedation

Administered by dentists with additional post-graduate training and qualification, this is a single drug that is placed through a small piece of plastic in your arm or hand. It is not unconsciousness but rather drowsiness and unawareness. The effect of the drug lasts approximately 30-40 minutes, during which time most dental procedures can be completed. As patients become more aware as the drug wears off, the clinician is normally finishing off the easy part of the procedure. Further details will be provided to you, including the need for a responsible adult escort to attend your appointment with you.

Summary

- Administered by dentists with additional training and qualification
- Goes through small piece of plastic in your arm
- Drowsiness and unaware but not asleep or unconscious

Deep Conscious Sedation

Administered by specially trained anaesthetists, this is a cocktail of multiple drugs that is placed through a small piece of plastic in your arm or hand. It is not total unconsciousness, but patients fall into deep sleep and are therefore unaware of the procedure. The anaesthetist can continue to top up the drugs so the effect can last longer as required. Further details will be provided to you, including the need for a responsible adult escort to attend your appointment with you.

Summary

- Administered by anaesthetists
- Goes through small piece of plastic in your arm
- In deep sleep but not unconscious

General Anaesthetic

Administered by anaesthetists, this cannot be administered in a dental clinic and requires you to attend a hospital. Sometimes with a preliminary bit of the laughing gas first, a drug is then placed through a piece of plastic in your arm or hand that will render you totally unconscious. Whilst unconscious, the anaesthetist will keep a continuous flow of a gas that passes through a tube placed in your throat. As you are unconscious throughout the procedure, you will be totally unaware of the surgery. Due to the nature of the anaesthetic, you will need to be in the hospital for at least half a day, if not a full day.

Summary

- Administered by anaesthetists in hospitals
- Total unconsciousness
- Will take the best part of a day