

Moderate Sedation in Interventional Radiology

Moderate sedation is a safe and effective option for patients having minor surgery or medical tests. During a procedure, medications are given to ease pain, fear and anxiety. The goal is to provide comfort and a prompt, safe recovery.

If you have any questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

What Happens During Moderate Sedation?

In the preparation area, an IV line will be placed into your arm or hand. You will then be taken to the procedure room and positioned safely on the procedure table. The nurse will connect you to a heart monitor, a blood pressure cuff and a finger probe that monitors oxygen levels. An oxygen tube may be placed under your nose. Medicine to relax you will be injected into the IV. Your healthcare team will care for you and monitor your vital signs and alertness during and after the procedure.

How Will I Feel?

During the procedure you may feel drowsy, but you will be awake and able to talk. Numbing medicine is injected at the procedure site. This will feel like a burning or pinching sensation like a bee sting. You will be able to feel heat, cold and pressure, but you will not feel sharp sensations after the numbing medicine is given. The healthcare team will talk with you about how you are feeling and keep you comfortable throughout your procedure.

After the procedure you may have the following side effects for up to 24 hours:

- Some or no memory of what happened during the procedure
- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting or dry mouth
- Sleepiness
- Feeling lightheaded or dizzy

If the above side effects do not improve or become worse, contact your doctor or go to your nearest emergency room. If you have any questions about moderate sedation or your procedure, please ask your doctor or nurse.

What Happens After the Procedure?

Most patients recover for about 1 hour after moderate sedation. In some cases, the recovery time may be up to 6 hours. During this time, a nurse will check on you often. A friend or family member at least 18 years of age must accompany you home. You cannot drive for 24 hours after you receive sedation. We suggest that this person remain with you for the next 6 hours.

The nurse will discuss the needed care at home with you and your family member or friend. These include the following:

- Rest today.
- Do not drive or operate machinery for 24 hours.
- Do not make any important decisions for 24 hours.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages for at least 24 hours.
- Do not take other muscle relaxants or sedative, hypnotic or mood altering medicines for at least 24 hours unless directed by your doctor.

Northwestern Medicine – Health Information Resources

For more information, contact Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Alberto Culver Health Learning Center (HLC) at hlc@nm.org, or by calling 312.926.5465. Health information professionals can help you find the information you need and provide you with personal support at no charge.

For more information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at nm.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar al Departamento de Representantes para Pacientes al 312.926.3112.

The entities that come together as Northwestern Medicine are committed to representing the communities we serve, fostering a culture of inclusion, delivering culturally competent care, providing access to treatment and programs in a nondiscriminatory manner and eliminating healthcare disparities. For questions, please call either Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Patient Representatives Department at 312.926.3112, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363 or the Northwestern Medical Group Patient Representatives Department at 312.695.1100, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363.

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