

## Patient information

# Information for parents of children having sedation

### Why does your child need sedation?

Children and babies who are unable to lie still are usually given sedation to enable them to sleep during the procedure. Sedation can also be given to older children who have medical or behavioral conditions which prevent them from being able to stay still. They will either be prescribed 'single' drug sedation using Chloral Hydrate or 'dual' sedation with two drugs: Chloral Hydrate and Alimemazine. Both are routinely given by mouth, although sometimes the Chloral Hydrate may be given by the rectum (PR). Our current success rate for this kind of sedation is 95%.

It is important that you **do not bring any other children or siblings with you** on the day of the procedure.

### Are there any risks involved?

There are some infrequent risks of sedation, which you need to be aware of:

- **Breathing:** Sedation may rarely cause respiratory depression. This can be an unexpected side-effect that can be detected early with continuous monitoring. A trained nurse will be allocated to carefully monitor your child's breathing throughout the procedure. The paediatric on-call team is also available at all times in case of emergency.
- **Central nervous system:** Sedation may cause headaches, confusion, loss of co-ordination and/or agitation. **They may become disorientated as the sedation takes effect; causing a minority of children to become anxious. Your child can be calmed and comforted by your presence and careful handling.** Your allocated trained nurse will assist you in maintaining your child's safety and comfort until their sedation has worn off.

- **Digestive system:** Sedation can cause mild gastric irritation such as vomiting or diarrhoea. Your child will need to be able to eat and drink before they are allowed home.
- **Skin:** Sedation can cause minor rashes which normally disappear without the need for any specific treatment.

## **The night before**

On the night before, please put your child to bed an hour later than normal and then wake them an hour earlier than normal, to ensure they are as sleepy as possible when they arrive for sedation.

## **Nothing to eat and drink (nil by mouth) instructions**

It is mandatory that you follow these instructions on eating and drinking before sedation. This is to ensure that sedation is given on an empty stomach to minimise the risk of aspiration.

## **For a morning appointment to arrive on Rainbow Ward**

- No food, formula / cow's milk or fizzy drinks after 6.00am.
- Can have breast milk or water or diluted squash as appropriate up until 8.00am.

## **On arrival at Rainbow Ward**

When you arrive on Rainbow Ward, please report to main reception where the Ward Clerk will check some details with you such as your current address, contact details and GP.

After you have been taken to your room, the nurse will check your child's temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate and oxygen saturation levels to ensure your child is well enough for the procedure to take place. It is important at this point that your child goes to the toilet (if they are toilet trained); as having a full bladder can wake your child from sleep once they are sedated. If your child is not dry at night or when sleeping, please bring an appropriate nappy or pull-up for them to wear during the sedation.

Unfortunately, the medicine chloral hydrate has a very unpleasant taste when given in the liquid form by mouth but it is very important that your child swallows the whole of the medication as it cannot be repeated.

Once your child is drowsy, the nurse will monitor your child closely to ensure their safety throughout the procedure, observing their breathing, colour, heart rate and oxygen level.

## **After the sedation**

A nurse will continue to monitor your child closely until he or she has regained consciousness. Some children wake up soon after their sedation whilst others may need to sleep for some time after, especially if they have had dual sedation, up to 6 hours post sedation in some cases. Once they are awake they will be able to have something to drink and then something to eat.

Due to the effects of the sedation on the central nervous system, they may be unsteady. They will require adult supervision until fully recovered and you may find that the drowsiness may persist into the following day. As soon as your nurse is happy that your child has made a satisfactory recovery from their sedation and are able to eat and drink, they will be allowed home.

## **Length of stay**

All children under sedation should be able to go home the same day. For a morning you can expect to go home between 12.00noon and 2.00pm. These times are only approximate and vary with each child.

## **After going home**

As a general rule, children need not be restricted in their usual activity, but adult supervision is advised, particularly during the first 24 hours post sedation. If your child attends a nursery / school, it is your decision whether to send them the next day but generally we advise they should keep off the next day so you can continue to observe them.

Should you have any worries or concerns within the first 24 hours after leaving the ward please feel free to contact us on 01284 713315.

If you have any specific concerns that you feel have not been answered and need explaining, please contact the following:

Rainbow Ward

01284 713315

Children's Advanced Nurse Practitioners

01284 713319

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>*



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