

Anesthetics for Oral Treatment

The following methods are available to control discomfort experienced during oral treatment. Please discuss your preference with us. Advise use of any medications you are taking in case they conflict with the following anesthetic methods:

1. **Local Anesthetic:** This type of anesthetic is by far the most common form used in dentistry. You will receive a nearly painless injection of a short-acting (one hour), long-acting (three hours), or extra-long-acting (up to six hours) local anesthetic. Almost no side effects result. Unless you have special preference, local anesthetics will be used for your dental services. There is not an additional fee for this service.
2. **General Anesthetic:** Certain conditions require the use of general anesthetic usually in a hospital environment. If this is necessary for you, usually an anesthesiologist or anesthesiologist will deliver the anesthetic while the dentist completes the oral treatment. You will be billed by the personnel delivering the anesthetic for that service and by our office for the oral treatment.
3. **General Anesthetic in a One-Day Surgicenter:** If your health is excellent and if your oral condition requiring general anesthetic is less severe, you may be treated in a surgicenter. The overall cost will be less than the same services in a hospital, but will still include the following fees: anesthesiologist or anesthesiologist fee, surgicenter fee, and the dentist's fee.
4. **Sedatives:** If you are very anxious or nervous about oral treatment, please ask us about pre-medication. This medication may be given to you to take before you arrive, or it may be provided to you about one-half hour before the treatment begins. You should plan to arrive one-half hour early and have someone present to drive you to your home.
5. **Electronic Anesthesia:** Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS) provides a very slight amount of electricity to the area to be anesthetized and produces non-chemical anesthesia for 70 percent or more of the patients. Initially, this procedure requires slightly more time than chemical anesthetics for effectiveness. However, on later appointments, it is faster than injected local anesthetics. Electronic anesthesia is harmless and has no after effects or post-operative "numbness."
6. **Nitrous Oxide:** Nitrous oxide gas, or "laughing gas," is a colorless non-flammable gas with a pleasant, slightly sweet odor and taste that reduces the sensation of pain and creates a euphoric feeling. There is no "hangover" effect. The effect is eliminated from the body within 3–5 minutes after the gas supply has stopped. You may drive home without an escort. Some patients still feel discomfort using nitrous oxide, and they require augmentation of local anesthetic. Nitrous oxide is not recommended for pregnant patients, patients who might be pregnant, and patients who suffer from emphysema.