

Oral Sedation for Endodontic Treatment

Many patients fear endodontic treatment. The fear of dental treatment may delay treatment and thereby worsen your health. But there is no reason to worry! Root canal treatment today is safer, quicker and more comfortable than ever before. However, if you prefer, we can arrange for oral sedation so that you will feel more at ease with the procedure. The pill we use for oral sedation is Ativan. The scientific or generic name is lorazepam. It is in the benzodiazepine family of drugs, similar to Valium. This pill has been used for years for control of anxiety and to promote relaxation and sleep. It is safe and effective, and wears off rapidly after the dental visit.

Usually the patients who take the oral sedation pill will sleep through some or all of the procedure and may remember very little of it. Whether you sleep during the procedure or not, the oral sedation will significantly and safely decrease your level of anxiety for the procedure. **YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DRIVE, AND YOU WILL NEED TO STAY AT HOME FOR THE REST OF THE DAY AFTER THE PROCEDURE.** So please, arrange a ride to drop you off at our office and pick you up after the procedure. Do not plan to go back to work or school after your appointment with oral sedation.

In order to prescribe lorazepam, Dr. Behrend must first see you for a short consultation, in order to check your medical history to see if there are any medical reasons that would prevent you from taking it. Sometimes, lorazepam is used along with a gas, nitrous oxide that is administered through a face mask. At your consultation appointment, Dr. Behrend will discuss the risks and benefits of oral sedation and give you more detailed instructions. An informed consent form with specific directions for taking Ativan will be given to you and signed at your consultation appointment. The consent form must be signed before you take the medication.

During your endodontic treatment with oral sedation, we will monitor your vital signs to see how you are reacting to the medication. A separate charge will be made for oral sedation and/ or nitrous oxide anesthesia. Usually, insurance companies will not pay for these services. Please talk with our receptionist or office manager if you have questions about these services.