

When your Child Needs Sedation in P.A.W.S.



Partner with us to Keep Your Child Safe

What we need:

- Your permission to treat

A parent or legal guardian who **knows** your child's **medical history** and is able to **legally give** the doctor **permission** to do the procedure **should come** with your child. If this is not possible, a parent or legal guardian **must** be **available by phone** to give **permission** and in the rare case of an emergency.

- To know **all** medicines your child is taking

A list of **all** of your child's **medicines** should be **brought** to the appointment. This list should **include** any **usual medicines** your child takes, as well as any **new medicines** for the current illness or injury.

- Your child to have an empty stomach

Your child should **avoid all** eating, drinking, sucking on candy, and chewing gum **after 2 AM** on the day of the appointment. This policy is very important and **must** be followed in order for your child to receive sedation medicine.

- To make sure girls of child-bearing age have a pregnancy test

If your daughter is **12 years old or older**, or if she has **begun** having **menstrual periods**, she will be asked to provide a **urine sample** to confirm she is not pregnant before being sedated. **This is a hospital-wide policy.** Sedation medicines can be harmful to unborn babies.

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We Want Your Child to Be Comfortable:

Pain medicines will help keep your child comfortable during and after the procedure.

- Many children will be given pain medicines by mouth prior to the procedure. Your child will most likely get either oxycodone, Tylenol®, or a combination of both.
- If your child is old enough (usually over the age of 8), you may receive a prescription to get the medicine in advance and directions on when to give it before your child's appointment.
- Younger children will receive their pain medicines at PAWS prior to the procedure. Younger children need to be monitored more closely than older children. This is why you may be asked to arrive much earlier than your appointment time. The medicines need time to start working before the procedure.

Important Note: Please be aware that the amount of pain medicine we give prior to procedures in PAWS is generally much larger than the amount of the same medicines used at home for pain. **DO NOT give your child the same amount of pain medicine as needed for a PAWS appointment unless specifically told by your child's doctor to do so.** Giving too large a dose at home without proper monitoring can be very dangerous and can even lead to death.

Sedation medicines will make your child sleepy and relaxed during the procedure. Two examples are:

1. **Ketamine:** This medicine is given through an IV. Your child will need to stay in the hospital for awhile to recover after the procedure. Because of these reasons, it is rarely used for children not already admitted to the hospital.
2. **Nitrous Oxide (Laughing gas):** This is a gas that is given through a mask that is held over the child's mouth and nose. It does not require an IV and usually has a very quick recovery time. Laughing gas is frequently used for patients who will be going home after the procedure.

Note: The doctor providing the sedation in PAWS will discuss with you the specific medicine that will be used for your child's appointment. The doctor will also answer any questions you have before the procedure.

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You May Stay with Your Child Until the Sedation Medicine is Given.

You will then be asked to wait in the waiting room (just a few feet away) until the procedure is completed and your child is waking up. Once your child is starting to wake up, you will be able to come back in the room. We realize that you want to be there to comfort your child. Most children have no memory of the time during the actual procedure. They will not even realize that you were gone for part of the time.

Why We Ask You to Wait in the Waiting Room During the Procedure:

- While we are sedating your child, our full attention needs to be focused on him or her to ensure your child's safety.
- Even the most medically-aware parents often need assistance from staff while witnessing their child's procedures, even if they have seen them before.
- If we need to delay any part of your child's procedure to take care of anyone else in the room, your child will not get the full benefit of the sedation medicine. This may cause your child to need to have part of the procedure done without sedation, which is not desirable.
- Your child's health and safety are our first priorities.

For General Health Information and Resources:

Call or visit the [Family Resource Center](#), a health information library on the 3rd floor of the hospital. Call 314.454.2350, email at frc@bjc.org, or check out the FREE [St. Louis Children's Hospital Kid Care App](#).

