

A Reason To Dream



by Wm. J. Schlotz, D.D.S.

I recently attended a DOCS (Dental Oral Conscious Sedation) continuing education course in Boston. A revealing survey of the attending dentists and staff was taken. Interestingly, of these *dental professionals*, 40% were either moderately or severely anxious at the thought of having dental work done on *them*.

Extrapolate those findings over to the general populace and it's apparent, despite all the modern advances in making dentistry a comfortable experience, our profession can do even more to ease the mind of many patients.

Take the very fearful dental patients (we do in our office). These people would benefit most from preventive and early, minimal intervention care. However, these folks tend to shy away from any dental visits whatsoever. Staying away, of course, doesn't contribute to dental health. Unfortunately, it works the other way.

Many more people are mild-moderately anxious about having dental treatment. They could "white-knuckle-it" through the procedure, but they would certainly prefer an alternative. For both of the above types of dental patient Oral Sedation is an attractive option.

Although the goal with Oral Sedation is NOT to create sleep, it is used to create an ultra-relaxed state where anxiety and stress just slip away. One small pill helps the patient feel groggy and enter into that "happy zone" while reclined comfortably in the chair.

Interestingly, many sedated patients feel like they slept through the entire visit since they have little or no memory of it afterward.

Oral Sedation also allows for even the most complex dental reconstructive treatment to be performed in just a few visits. Treatment correcting years of neglect, that might have taken months to perform *sans*-sedation, usually can be accomplished unbelievably quickly with the benefit of the pill. Sometimes, treatment may involve only ONE visit.

According to medical expert Dr. Leslie Fang, M.D., given an accurate health history, and accurately following DOCS protocol, the mortality incidence for the oral sedation patient is zero. The same cannot be said for the proper use of virtually any other medication including aspirin, ibuprofen and many common antibiotics (Google- "allergic response" to those meds to learn more). Moreover, the risks associated with general anesthesia, although small, is well documented.

As you can see, Oral Sedation, a non-recognized specialty of the ADA, is exceedingly safe and effective. Are you a nervous dental patient? If so, this Smile's for You!

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