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Procedural Sedation

In most cases procedures can be safely carried out under local anaesthetic and sedation is not required.

Local anaesthetic is administered to the skin to help with needle placement for your procedure. In most circumstances this is enough to make the procedure acceptable for the majority of patients. It is impossible to “numb” where the “needle hasn’t got to yet” meaning that it is not possible to make it a completely pain-free experience, though your consultant is careful to make it as tolerable for you as possible. Often patients report that their anxiety before the procedure had made them imagine the discomfort of the procedure to be worse than it actually turned out to be in reality.

Sedation for procedures is sometimes recommended by your Consultant to help with relaxation and occasionally pain. This depends upon the procedure and is not suitable for all interventions. If sedation is administered, you will still be conscious and aware, and therefore able to communicate throughout the procedure. Being “knocked out”, unconscious, or receiving a General Anaesthetic is not supported by current guidelines for the majority of procedures undertaken, and in some situations could pose an additional risk.

If sedation is recommended it is imperative that you adhere to the fasting guidelines and other instructions given to you around the time of your procedure, otherwise you risk having your procedure cancelled. You should not drive, operate machinery, or sign important documents for 24 hours after your procedure.

Targeting Pain

Specialist Management of Complex Chronic Pain