



Policy on Sedatives for Procedures and Scans

Wistaria and Milford Surgeries, in line with other GP practices, and our LMC, have taken the following policy decision with regards to the prescription of sedatives prior to any scans or procedures being completed at other venues, such as hospitals or clinics.

We are unable to prescribe sedatives, such as diazepam, other benzodiazepines or similar medicines for any procedure or scan being undertaken outside the practice. This includes MRI scans and dental procedures.

If you feel you need sedation for a procedure or scan, please speak to the team undertaking the procedure or scan, as they are responsible for providing this if needed.

All NHS hospitals should have formal procedures in place for sedation during procedures, so these requests should not need to be routed through your GP.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of why we have made this decision...

- **GPs are not sedation specialists:** GPs are not regularly involved, skilled, trained, or assessed in sedation skills. Providing too little sedation won't help you, and providing too much sedation can make you too sleepy, which could lead to the procedure being cancelled. Excessive sedation can also dangerously affect your respiration rate (breathing). After taking a sedative for a procedure or scan, close monitoring is required for your own safety.
- **Unpredictable Effects of Diazepam:** Although diazepam makes most people sleepy, in some rare situations, it can have the opposite effect and make people excessively aggressive or agitated.
- **Unavoidable delays:** Scans and hospital procedures are often delayed. Therefore, it's much better for the team performing the procedure or scan to provide the sedation to ensure you become sleepy and relaxed at the right time.
- **Need for Regular Monitoring:** Sedated patients should be regularly monitored. There has been a case where a GP-prescribed sedative was used, the patient wasn't monitored, and subsequently had a respiratory arrest (stopped breathing) in an MRI machine.
- **Guidelines from the Royal College of Radiologists:** The Royal College of Radiologists' guidelines on sedation for imaging make no mention of GP involvement or prescribing and stress the importance of experienced, well-trained staff being involved and the need for monitoring of sedated patients.

This information can be shared with your dentist or clinician should it be required.

We thank you for your understanding in this matter.