

EFFECTS OF SEDATION AND ANALGESIA

Information for the user and their accompanying person

Date of appointment (yyyy/mm/dd): _____

Time of appointment: _____

Name of physician: _____

About sedatives and analgesics

You were given a sedative (*calming agent*) and/or an analgesic (*pain killer*), medications that can make you drowsy for up to 24 hours. They can also lessen the pain associated with a medical examination or procedure.

The medications you were given last for different amounts of time, which is why we kept you under observation for a while. Everybody responds differently to these medications. Some people have very few symptoms, while others may fall asleep quickly.

It's possible that you may have some side effects, including:

- drowsiness (feeling like you want to fall asleep);
- dizziness;
- balance problems;
- nausea, vomiting;
- weakness;
- feeling like everything is moving in slow motion.

The medication will wear off in the next 12 to 24 hours.

Avoid substances that cause drowsiness

If you were given a sedative or an analgesic, it's best not to drink alcohol, use cannabis, or take antihistamines, anti-nausea medications, or any other product that causes drowsiness. All of these substances can make you sleepy and increase your risk of falling.

If you usually take sleeping pills, it's best not to take them the night of your examination or procedure.

If you take pain medication, you can continue to take it as prescribed by your doctor.

Once you are home

Monitoring for the next 24 hours

- Ideally, a responsible adult should accompany you home and stay with you for the next 24 hours, because your faculties will be impaired.

Because the medication affects concentration, alertness, and judgment:

- **Do not drive your car**, for your safety and that of others, because your faculties will be impaired. Driving in this condition makes you 2-5 times more likely to have an accident.
- Do not take the bus or walk anywhere alone.
- Do not do any dangerous manual work or use dangerous tools.
- Do not sign any important documents.
- Walk slower than usual to avoid falling.
- Hold onto your accompanying person's arm for support.

Advice for the accompanying person

- If your loved one falls asleep when they get home, you should monitor their breathing for the first 4 hours.
- An adult takes 16-20 breaths per minute (10-14 per minute at rest).
- It's also important to check their skin colour.
- After they have been sleeping for 1-2 hours, call their name or touch them. If they answer or open their eyes, everything is fine.
- However, if you have trouble waking them up, persist until you are able to wake them up completely.
- If they snore loudly, have them lie on their side; help them into that position if needed.

Signs and symptoms to watch for

- Increased drowsiness
- Difficulty waking up
- Difficulty breathing
- Snoring
- Feeling of general discomfort

Respiratory distress is very rare, but you need to be able to recognize the signs and act quickly if it happens.

Call 911 immediately if:

- Their breathing is very slow (8 breaths or fewer per minute).
- You are unable to wake them up (they are unresponsive).
- Their skin turns blue or grey.

What to do in the meantime

- Stimulate them by talking very loudly, removing their blankets, or placing a cold towel on their neck.

If you have questions or concerns about your health, you can call Info-Santé (811) 24/7 to speak to a nurse.

Reference

Collège des médecins du Québec, Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec, and Ordre professionnel des inhalothérapeutes du Québec, (2015). *Lignes directrices sur la sédation analgésie*. Publication by the CMQ.

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