

5 Tips for Improving Patient Care With Procedural Sedation

Procedural sedation has numerous benefits for patients and staff, including decreased stress and fear levels, better diagnostic results and increased safety and efficiency. Here are 5 tips from Kate Lafferty, BFA, RLAT, CVT, VTS (Anesthesia/Analgesia), for implementing procedural sedation to optimize patient care. Scan the QR code below to watch the Step by Step video, sponsored by Dechra.

1. Tailor the sedation protocol for each patient

Consider the patient's temperament, age, pain status, and comorbidities when determining their sedation protocol. Your plan for a wiggly puppy needing x-rays will differ from a geriatric, fractious German shepherd with arthritis who needs an ultrasound.

2. Consider the procedure

When deciding on the drug (or drugs) to use, consider the procedure. How long will the process take? Will the procedure be painful or uncomfortable for the patient? Determining these factors can help you choose a drug that will sedate the patient for the appropriate time and level.

3. Titrate to effect

To minimize potential side effects, titrate to effect. You can always administer more medication, if necessary, but you can't subtract medication if you oversedate the patient. Also, consider that titration is easier with intravenous access via a catheter.

4. Limit external stimulation

Limit external stimulation by covering the patient's eyes, placing earplugs, minimizing noise

in the treatment area, and padding the patient to keep them as comfortable as possible during the procedure. This helps prevent the need for additional drugs.

5. Monitor the patient carefully

Procedural sedation alters the patient's consciousness, and they need careful monitoring. At a minimum, you should use a pulse oximeter, monitor their temperature, and monitor their vital signs hands-on. Also, consider non-invasively measuring blood pressure.



To learn more about this topic, watch Kate Lafferty's Step by Step video, sponsored by Dechra, by scanning the QR code.

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For more information on Zenalpha® (medetomidine and vatinoxan hydrochlorides), please see full prescribing information on page 54.

Context

What is PSA? Procedural sedation and analgesia (PSA) is the process of administering different short-acting sedatives, analgesic opioids, or dissociative agents, for patients undergoing procedures that can cause anxiety and/or pain.



Reasons to Incorporate PSA:	
Common uses:	Less utilized uses:
• Radiographs • U-cath • CT • Echocardiogram • Local blocks • IVC	• Temperament • Physical exam • Nail trim • Ear cleanings

- Radiographs
- U-cath
- CT
- Echocardiogram
- Local blocks
- IVC

- Temperament
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- Increased safety (patient/staff)
- Decreased fear/negative associations (patient/staff)
- Improved diagnostics
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Preplanning

Identify Goals in Protocol Development

- **Considerations for the patient:**
 - Temperament (Fractious vs nervous vs wiggly)
 - Co-existing conditions/contraindications (What drugs best serve this patient?)

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- Sedation level (How much is needed?)
 - Duration (How long is needed?)
 - Procedure (Is this an appropriate place for sedation?)

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Identify Available Drug Options

- Sedatives:**
- Acepromazine
 - Midazolam
 - Dexmedetomidine
 - Zenalpha®
 - Alfaxalone

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- Opioids:
 - Butorphanol
 - Buprenorphine
 - Hydromorphone
 - Methadone
 - Fentanyl

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- Dissociatives:**
- Ketamine

Planning

Create a Sedation Plan

- Painful vs non-painful
- Healthy vs sick
- Young vs geriatric
- Scared/Aggressive vs calm

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- Choose an appropriate level of sedation:
 - Category A: Analgesic Opioid only
 - Category B: Sedative + Analgesic Opioid
 - Category C: Sedative + Analgesic Opioid + Adjunct (ketamine, alfaxalone)

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Optimize for a Positive Sedation Outcome

- Limit potential side effects:
- Titrate to effect:
- Easier to add than subtract
- Works best when using IV

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- Minimize stimulation:
 - Cover eyes
 - Use ear plugs
 - Keep spaces quiet, padded, and comfortable

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- **Focus on safety:**
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- Preplan for every contingency

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- Pulse oximeter
- Temperature
- Hands-on monitoring
- Non-invasive blood pressure
- ETCO₂ (Can be used with mask)
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