



TAKING THE FEAR OUT OF DENTISTRY



By: Steven D. Spitz, DMD

tures, and eight teeth on the bottom. Another patient told me that her recollection of dental care growing up was a pair of oversized hands coming at her (without gloves) and working in her mouth. It made her feel helpless and as if she couldn't breathe. To this day she becomes nervous when she sees hands moving towards her.

What do these patients all have in common? They each have a tremendous fear of the dentist, dental care and the dental office. And, with help of oral sedation, they have all received the dental care they needed and wanted - comfortably. Oral sedation is also for patients that may have difficulty getting numb or have a fear of needles, as none are used.

What is oral sedation?

Oral sedation allows those who are anxious to take a little pill and have treatment completed in the dental office, in a comfortable and relaxed state of mind. A secondary benefit of sedation is little or no memory of the experience and treatment that may usually require 6-8 office visits can be completed in one extended visit.

How does oral sedation work?

An hour before treatment, the patient orally takes the medication that allow them to become drowsy; awake, able to walk and follow directions, but able overlook the anxiety. A companion will accompany them to the visit, where they are directed to a private, comfortable operatory. The patient is then seated and covered with a warm blanket. Once comfortable, the vital signs are monitored carefully and constantly and the dental treatment is completed. When finished, juice is given to 'wake' the patient. At this point, the patient is usually still quite sedate, but able to walk and talk. The companion is given instruction of what to expect in the next 12 hours: drowsiness, dental concerns, etc., and the patient heads home.



Who is a candidate for oral sedation?

Anyone who is a candidate for dental procedures is able to benefit from oral sedation. Discuss specific health related issues with your dentist.

Who performs oral sedation?

All dental professionals have the ability to prescribe and use oral sedation. However, not all dentists utilize it in their office. Ask your dentist if they use it, how often they use it, how many cases they do on a yearly basis, and if the office is licensed by the state for conscious sedation. You will also want to ask if the doctor has had specific training in the use of oral conscious sedation. If a den-

Taking the Fear Out of Dentistry

Has a fear of the dentist or dental office kept you from seeking the dental care you want and need? Today, dental offices have a variety of options available for those who are interested in seeking dental treatment.

Publisher's Note

I recently had some work done on my teeth by Dr. Spitz, and nobody has ever gone to such efforts to make me feel as comfortable and relaxed. He genuinely cared about my entire well-being rather than simply going through the motions to get me out of the chair as quickly as possible. If you are as nervous as I am about seeing the dentist, I highly recommend seeing Dr. Spitz for your next appointment.

Steven D. Spitz, DMD is the proprietor of Smileboston Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry in Boston, a Prosthodontist and a dental implant specialist. Dr. Spitz, co-founded the Institute of Advanced Laser Dentistry and co-invented the Perfect-Fit™ Laser Implant Surgical Guide (patent pending). He has lectured nationally and internationally on the advanced applications of lasers and implant dentistry. At the 2004 World Clinical Laser Institute symposium, Dr. Spitz received the "Award for Leadership and Outstanding Contributions in Advancing Dentistry Through Laser Technology."

Dr. Spitz has the ability, education, and training to complete the surgical and aesthetic phases of dental implant treatment. Having been trained surgically in the placement of various types of dental implants and as a Prosthodontist has allowed Dr. Spitz to treat individuals that have been told dental implants will not work for them.

Dr. Spitz, who treats all facets of dentistry, welcomes your questions.

Office: 617 437 1060

Email:

Smileboston@verizon.net

Website::

www.smileboston.net

Additional Techniques to Relax at the Dental Office

Quiet Relaxation.

DVDs and CDs can aid in comfortably relaxing someone with a mild anxiety.

Nitrous Oxide.

Also known as 'laughing gas' allows you to feel relaxed when in the dental chair.

Valium.

Dispensed through the pharmacy, Valium relaxes you when in the dental chair.

IV Sedation.

This procedure utilizes an intravenous connection and the medications are administered during the procedure. During the procedure, you are able to follow direction, but are relaxed.

General Anesthesia.

Treatment is completed in the hospital as an outpatient, while you are asleep. For patient with high fear, this is a great option.