

Ketamine Sedation

This leaflet offers information about Ketamine sedation. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your child's care.

What is Ketamine?

Ketamine is a medication used for pain control and for sedating patients who require brief painful or unpleasant procedures. It will make your child feel sleepy and relaxed. This enables the procedure to be performed with less distress and pain for your child. It will also mean that your child may not remember the procedure or may remember only parts of it.

What are the side effects and risks with Ketamine?

With any sedating drug there are potential risks and side effects. The common and the rare but serious side effects are listed below:

- Your child may move a little without obvious cause, this is normal.
- Your child's eyes may twitch, this is normal.
- Fewer than 1 in 5 children reports odd dreams on waking up and may become a little agitated. This tends to improve if you comfort your child as they wake, until they are fully awake.
- 1 in 5 children experiences mild agitation.
- 1 in 10 children develops a temporary rash.
- 1 in 10 children vomits.
- 1 in 10 children will have some eye watering or may drool (hypersalivation). Evidence suggests that co-administration of other medication to reduce this drooling is unnecessary.
- 1 in 20 children may have some involuntary movements.
- A very rare but serious side effect is that your child will need help with their breathing. This happens in 0.3% of cases (i.e., 3 in 1,000 cases).
- In 0.02% (2 in 20,000) of cases children need to be given a general anaesthetic, to make them fully asleep, and need to have a breathing tube inserted into the windpipe.

What will happen before the procedure?

We will apply some anaesthetic cream for about 20-40 minutes to the back of your child's hand or inside their elbow, to make the area numb. We will then place a cannula (a tube into the vein) into the numb area, which we will use to give the medications.

We will move you and your child to a calm and quiet part of the department. We will put your child onto monitoring and we will apply a mask that blows oxygen, if it doesn't distress them. You are welcome to be with your child throughout all of this.

We will encourage your child to think of positive things before the Ketamine injection and to plan a nice dream to have while sedated. We will keep the environment as calm as possible, to help your child to feel relaxed. If your child has toys or preferred music that you think will help them to feel calm then we encourage this.

What will happen during the procedure?

There will be staff present to focus on the sedation and other staff present for the procedure. The Ketamine will be injected into the cannula (the small tube in your child's vein) and takes about one minute to work. We will be monitoring your child constantly. Once we see that your child is comfortably sedated, the staff will begin the procedure. Those staff who are there for the sedation will continue to monitor your child constantly throughout the procedure.

Once sedated, your child may seem to be awake but they are unaware of their surroundings. They may make random, purposeless movements, have eye twitching or have eye watering. These are all normal side effects after Ketamine and do not indicate distress.

What will happen after the procedure?

Your child will gradually wake up after about 10 to 20 minutes. We will continue to monitor your child throughout this phase.

Patients can generally go home 90 minutes after the sedation. This is when they are alert, talking and walking unaided.

Sometimes this medicine can cause **vomiting** which may occur once you have left the department. This usually occurs if your child has had a big meal within two hours of the sedation being given. Therefore, please give your child small amounts of clear fluids such as diluted juice or water and wait for two hours before giving them anything to eat. If your child suffers from recurrent vomiting after you have left, please contact the department

Patients may remain mildly sleepy or clumsy for a few hours afterwards. They should be closely supervised for the first eight hours following discharge and for the next 24 hours **should not**:

- Get involved in strenuous or sporting activities.
- Use play equipment such as monkey bars, climbing frames or bicycles etc.

It is perfectly normal for your child to want to go to sleep following an initial recovery from the drug. Some children sleep more because of this sedation medicine. Do let your child sleep and eat and drink only small amounts to minimise the risk of vomiting.

Contact us

If you have any concerns that your child may be experiencing problems or if you have any concerns, please contact us on 020 8672 1255 and either ask to be put through to the Children's and Young People's Emergency department or dial extension 3518.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk).

The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

