

Pre-medication for Dental Treatment

Pre-medication refers to taking a prescribed medication before a treatment or procedure. This aims to relax you slightly and help you accept dental care, or additional sedation. Pre-medication generally involves taking a sedative tablet or tablets that your doctor or dentist prescribes to help you feel calmer and more relaxed during your planned dental visit.

Most people take this an hour before their dental visit. Sometimes an extra dose the night before your treatment can help people be more relaxed the day of their treatment.

What pre-medications are available?

The most common premedications offered by dentists are 'Diazepam' or 'Temazepam'. Your dentist will decide which is most appropriate for you based on your personal needs and health status. Your dentist will also check that these drugs do not interact strongly with any of your co-existing medications before they are prescribed.

If you have taken either of these medications before and had a negative side effect or allergic reaction, please inform your dentist straight away. Some individuals are prescribed premedications by their doctor for other health reasons such as insomnia or a fear of flying. Please do not self-prescribe or take additional tablets beyond what your dentist has prescribed and advised for your dental procedure.

How would a pre-medication make me feel?

The tablets have a varied effect on each person. You may feel less anxious, drowsy or tired. You will be alert enough to walk, talk and be cooperative after taking the tablet. Some individuals who may have been prescribed similar medications for a medical condition may develop a 'tolerance', so the drug may be less effective.

Is premedication the same as Oral Sedation?

No. Premedication is a tablet taken the night before dental treatment and/or a few hours before to help calm you down and help you arrive at your dental visit without getting too anxious. It is mild, and you are still alert and aware of your surroundings, although more at ease.

Oral sedation is the administration of a much larger dose of sedative in the form of a tablet or drink under the supervision of a dentist. Oral sedation is generally commonly used for individuals who are frightened of having a cannula tube inserted in their hand or arm. If you can cope with cannula placement, this is the easiest and safest route to provide you with extra sedation.

What else do I need to know?

Do not come to your appointments alone. You cannot drive for 24 hours after taking a pre-medication tablet.

Pre-medication prescriptions will be valid for 28 days only. If you pay for your NHS prescriptions, you will have to pay for your pre-medication tablets.

For good practice, take your prescription to a local pharmacy as soon as possible, even if your dental visit is not planned for some time. Once you have your medication, take it home, store it in a locked cupboard that only you have access to and keep it out of reach of young children. Never leave a pre-medication drug in public sight, for example, on the seat of a locked car.

If your prescription expires, you will need to arrange to see the prescribing doctor again for another prescription. You must bring the expired prescription to the appointment to be issued a new one so that it can be accounted for and discarded appropriately.

Key instructions

- Do not drink alcohol 24 hours before or after taking the medication.
- Do not drive a car or be responsible for any dependants once you have taken a pre-medication.
- Make sure you have organised a chaperone to escort you to and from the dental clinic. You must also have a responsible adult to look after you for 24 hours after the last dose of medication has been taken.
- Make a note of the times you have taken your medication to tell your dentist.
- For best effects, take the tablets on an empty stomach 1-2 hours before your appointment time.
- Do not skip doses of your usual medications unless you have been expressly advised to do so by your dentist or doctor.
- Once your dental treatment is complete, do not store unused medicines at home. You must discard any unused medication by giving it to your dentist or pharmacist.
- Nursing mothers should not breast feed for 24 hours after their dental treatment if pre-medication or sedation has been used.

Contact Details

If you have any queries or questions, please contact University Dental Hospital of Manchester:

 0161 393 7735 (Restorative Dentistry) or 0161 393 7734 (Oral surgery)

 dental.booking@mft.nhs.uk

 <https://mft.nhs.uk/dental/>