

# NTEA ENDO FAX

Compliments of North Texas Endodontic Associates

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Endodontic treatment may be perceived as an unpleasant experience for some patients. It is no wonder that patients may resist referral, exhibit severe anxiety, or avoid treatment entirely. For moderate to severely anxious patients, intravenous anesthetic modalities are indicated to ensure that these patients undergo treatment in a relaxed, comfortable, and safe manner. Stress releases endogenous catecholamines, with concomitant increases in heart rate, blood pressure, and anxiety. These changes may be detrimental for healthy patients, but may become life threatening in patients with underlying cardiorespiratory diseases. Intravenous anesthesia is designed to attenuate the stress response, relieve anxiety, and maintain hemodynamic stability. Therefore, the following types of patients would benefit from intravenous anesthesia:

**Patients with dental *anxiety or phobia*.** Anxiety is the leading cause of medical emergencies in the dental office. Intravenous anesthesia reduces the chance of adverse reaction by reducing or eliminating apprehension levels.

**Patients with a history of *medical problems*** such as heart disease, high blood pressure, asthma, etc. Intravenous anesthesia minimizes the medical risk to these patients, making them less likely to experience an adverse reaction.

**Fearful, uncooperative, or unruly *pediatric patients*.** These patients are among the most difficult to manage comfortably in the dental setting. Intravenous anesthesia eliminates a child's fear and awareness during treatment, and produces the necessary conditions for the provision of quality dental care.

**Patients requiring *surgical procedures*,** such as apicoectomy. Surgery can be long, tedious, and stressful for the endodontic patient. Intravenous anesthesia removes the stress associated with these procedures, and produces a significant degree of amnesia as well. It ensures a motionless patient, a necessity when microscopic procedures are performed.

**Patients with *hyperactive gag reflexes*.** Sedation and anesthesia suppress the gag reflex so that endodontic therapy can be completed in a timely fashion.

**Patients *refractory to local anesthesia*.** Occasionally, an inflamed or abscessed tooth may alter the conduction characteristics of the nerve, making profound local anesthesia difficult or impossible to obtain. Intravenous anesthesia can enhance the effectiveness of local anesthetics and eliminate this problem.

**Patients with *mental or physical handicaps*.** Often, these patients lack the ability to cooperate to the level necessary for the provision of quality treatment. Intravenous anesthesia provides optimum conditions for quality care.

Another advantage of in-office anesthesia is effective time management for both the patient and doctor. Patients often need multiple treatments. With the aid of intravenous anesthesia, multiple-tooth endodontic treatment and/or surgery may be performed efficiently and safely during one appointment, thus enhancing overall patient satisfaction.

Anesthesia services are provided in this office by fully trained and qualified dentist anesthesiologists. Attention is given to patient safety and comfort. Pretreatment consultations are performed, medications are reviewed, and questions are answered as every attempt is made to identify potentially reactive patients. All patients are fully monitored during treatment, and comprehensive emergency drugs and equipment are available at chairside. Intravenous anesthesia is a valuable adjunct to endodontic practice. It provides just the right "attitude adjustment" that many patients need to overcome their anxiety.

*Endo Fax is produced by North Texas Endodontic Associates, Dr. David Witherspoon, Dr. Gary Harris, and Dr. Joel Small, and is intended to aid the practitioner in the management of endodontic conditions. Practitioners must always use their own best professional judgment. We neither expressly or implicitly warrant any positive results associated with this material.*