

Ask Yourself These Questions Before Learning IV Sedation

Dentists who are at a turning point in their practice or career may be looking at leveling up what services they can offer both current and prospective patients. Between the increasing awareness of dental anxiety and the shifting regulatory guidelines involving sedation dentistry, intravenous (IV) sedation has become an appealing solution for many dental professionals.

How do you determine if [IV Sedation](#) is a good option for *your* practice? We've compiled 6 important questions to ask before making the investment of time and money to learn IV sedation dentistry.

1. Is IV sedation a good fit for my practice?

There are several factors to review when determining if IV sedation is a good fit. These considerations may include:

- Evaluate your patient base for need and financial feasibility.
- Look at the type of procedures most often performed and if IV would make them easier for patients.
- How many chairs do you run, and could IV increase your capacity?
- If you're the sole doctor, have associates, or employ a sizable team can all factor in to the practicality of adding IV services.
- Dentists will also need to look at their physical space to accommodate additional equipment and team members.

2. Am I legally able to administer IV sedation?

Requirements and restrictions for providing IV sedation in the dental office can vary by state and guidelines are constantly changing. Currently, the practice of parenteral (IV) sedation in an outpatient setting does not meet the requirements in Missouri, Nevada, or New York. To find out the sedation regulations in your individual state or province, check [here](#) or contact a DOCS Course Advisor at 855-227-6505.

3. What do I need to qualify or get certified?

Due to the elevated level of care involved with IV sedation, additional comprehensive education is required. Many state regulatory bodies stipulate that IV certification is issued by a Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)-certified institution through an approved training program.

The AGD PACE requirements include 90 hours of continuing education credits which combines both didactic study as well as hands-on training with live patients. Nationally recognized educational organizations also fulfill the ADA-recommended advanced airway management and opioid prescription training, plus qualifying for ACLS certification. In addition to the education factor, DOCS also works with dentists to complete and file the necessary paperwork for certification or permits.

4. What equipment or resources will I need?

Dentists will need to invest in the necessary equipment and resources beyond hypodermic needles, catheters, and prescription medications for administering IV sedation. Some of the integral items to have on hand should include:

- Patient monitor with capnography
- Airway management kit
- Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)
- Precordial stethoscope
- Companion chair
- DEA-compliant drug cabinet

One of the most important resources for practicing IV sedation in the dental office is a confident, well-trained team. In fact, DOCS Education considers the dental team such a vital part of good patient care they require every dentist to bring at least one staff member to the clinical course.

5. What treatment or procedures am I comfortable performing?

Many dentists are interested in IV sedation for the ability to perform more intensive and extensive dental care, but it's important to assess your own individual level of comfort. Make sure you're prepared to learn and practice the necessary skills for safe and effective parenteral administration, as well as the critical emergency training required. Does the size of your office and skill level of your team accommodate the addition of IV procedures?

6. How will IV sedation benefit my practice?

While there is a significant investment of both time and money required to learn and administer IV sedation, the ultimate benefits can be substantial. With a relaxed, sedated patient in the chair, a dental professional is able to accomplish more quality dentistry in less time – including restorations, endodontics, extractions, and more.

If you're looking to increase your patient base, then IV is a great way to attract and treat those with extreme anxiety who need extensive care and would otherwise be referred out. Besides increasing productivity in the practice, it elevates your profile and puts you in higher demand.

"It's a game changer," according to Bill Blatchford, DDS, and DOCS alumni. "And if you combine sedation with implant surgery, I can tell you, it will double your practice's net income within 12 months."

[DOCS Education](#) offers courses throughout the United States and Canada illustrating safe and effective oral and IV sedation dentistry techniques. Since 1999 our faculty has instructed over 30,000 dental professionals in these procedures, which affect patients ranging from the very young to seniors. We also provide instruction in emergency preparedness. Now based in Manalapan, NJ, DOCS Education was founded to address the estimated 3 in 10 Americans who fear dental care to the point that they avoid even routine treatment, thus compromising their overall health. Approximately 2 million patients have returned to regular dental treatment as a result of the availability of oral and IV sedation, services they received through their dentists' participation in DOCS Education courses.