

The Use of Conscious Sedation by Periodontists*

BACKGROUND

During periodontal care, pain control is accomplished through analgesia or local anesthesia, utilizing analgesic, local anesthetic, or non-pharmacologic agents. Pain control in itself may not, however, be adequate to accomplish periodontal treatment procedures in a comfortable manner for all patients. Anxiety control utilizing pharmacologic agents is indicated for some individuals.^{1,2} To effectively and comfortably provide periodontal care for the anxious patient, periodontists must be trained in and be capable of providing anxiety control by conscious sedation.

The *Accreditation Standards for Advanced Specialty Education Programs in Periodontics*³ require periodontists to achieve in-depth knowledge in all areas of conscious sedation, and proficiency in more than one method of conscious sedation. In addition, the advanced education programs in periodontics are provided direction in teaching conscious sedation from the American Dental Association's *Guidelines for Teaching the Comprehensive Control of Anxiety and Pain in Dentistry*.⁴ Furthermore, the American Academy of Periodontology's guidelines, *In-Office Use of Conscious Sedation in Periodontics*,⁵ are based upon the American Dental Association's *Guidelines for the Use of Conscious Sedation, Deep Sedation, and General Anesthesia for Dentists*.⁶

Conscious sedation may be regulated by state dental boards. In this regulatory process, requirements and qualifications to ensure the safe and effective use

of conscious sedation are established and revised. Moreover, permits or certificates to use conscious sedation may be issued. Periodontists have an interest in the just development and application of this regulatory process.

POLICY STATEMENT

The use of conscious sedation modalities during the course of periodontal therapy is within the scope of periodontal practice.

REFERENCES

1. American Academy of Periodontology. Guidelines for periodontal therapy (position paper). *J Periodontol* 2001; 72:1624-1628.
2. American Dental Association. The Use of Conscious Sedation, Deep Sedation and General Anesthesia in Dentistry (policy statement). Adopted by the American Dental Association House of Delegates, October 1999.
3. Commission on Dental Accreditation. *Accreditation Standards for Advanced Specialty Education Programs in Periodontics*. Chicago: American Dental Association; 2002:20.
4. American Dental Association. Guidelines for Teaching the Comprehensive Control of Anxiety and Pain in Dentistry. Adopted by the American Dental Association House of Delegates, October 2002.
5. American Academy of Periodontology. In-office use of conscious sedation in periodontics (position paper). *J Periodontol* 2001;72:968-975.
6. American Dental Association. Guidelines for the Use of Conscious Sedation, Deep Sedation, and General Anesthesia for Dentists. Adopted by the American Dental Association House of Delegates, October 2002.

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