Who Is Sleep Dentistry Suitable For? | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/sleep-dentistry-suitable/

Details:

Sleep dentistry, also known as sedation dentistry, uses sedation to help you receive dental treatment in a comfortable, relaxed way. It creates a drowsy, dreamlike state, and many people have little memory of the procedure afterwards. Most adults who are medically suitable can be considered for it. At Core Dental, a dentist assesses you first, and an anaesthetist also confirms your suitability before the procedure. Sleep dentistry is offered at selected Core Dental clinics, so please check with our team when you book.

What is sleep dentistry?

Sleep dentistry, also known as sedation dentistry, is a method of sedation that lets you receive dental treatment comfortably and with less stress. It induces a drowsy, dreamlike state that helps you relax and generally leaves you with little to no memory of the procedure afterwards. You remain able to respond to questions during the procedure, and a specialist anaesthetist monitors you throughout to look after your wellbeing and comfort.

Who is eligible for sleep dentistry?

If a dentist considers you medically suitable, sleep dentistry may be an option for you, including for a wide range of dental procedures. To check that you are medically well enough, you will be assessed by a dentist, and the anaesthetist will also confirm your suitability before the procedure. Suitability depends on your medical history and current health, so please tell us about your conditions and medicines.

Which patients might particularly benefit from sleep dentistry?

Sleep dentistry may help people who:

feel high anxiety about dental visits or have dental phobia

have had traumatic or negative dental experiences in the past

need multiple treatments, such as restorations and extractions, or treatment in different parts of the mouth

find it difficult to become fully numb with conventional local anaesthetic

have a severe or involuntary gag reflex, or find it hard to keep their mouth open for long periods

are afraid of the needles used in dental procedures

dislike the sounds and smells of dentistry

have jaw problems, such as limited mouth opening

Is a patient monitored during sleep dentistry?

Yes. A specialist anaesthetist monitors you throughout the procedure to look after your wellbeing and comfort.

Will you remember the procedure?

Sleep dentistry induces a drowsy, dreamlike state, and most people have little to no memory of the procedure afterwards. You remain able to respond to questions while it is happening.

How can you plan your care with our team?

A useful first step is to tell us about your concern, any symptoms and your goals when you book. Bring relevant medical information and a current list of medicines. Our team can then check your teeth, gums, bite and surrounding tissues, take imaging when it is clinically appropriate and explain which options suit you.

It is reasonable to ask what the recommended approach is meant to achieve, whether there are alternatives, and what preparation, aftercare and risks are involved. Time, fees and maintenance vary with each person's diagnosis, and a written treatment plan helps you compare stages and payment arrangements before you go ahead.

Call 000 immediately for uncontrollable bleeding, difficulty breathing or swallowing, a serious facial injury or other life-threatening symptoms. For severe tooth pain or swelling without these emergency signs, contact your dental practice promptly.

What does "conscious" mean in the regulator's own definition?

Everyday language and regulatory language part company here, and the gap is worth closing before you decide anything.

The Dental Board of Australia defines conscious sedation as "a technique used in dental practice to induce a depression of consciousness during which patients are able to respond purposefully to verbal commands or light tactile stimulation." Read that definition carefully and the word "conscious" is doing real work. Being able to respond purposefully — to a spoken instruction, or to a light touch — is part of what the technique is defined as producing. It is not an incidental feature or a sign that the sedation has worn off early.

This is why the phrase "sleep dentistry", which is what most people search for and what most practices use, describes the experience rather than the pharmacology. Many patients remember little or nothing afterwards, and the subjective impression is of having slept. The formal position is that responsiveness is retained.

It also explains why suitability is assessed rather than assumed. A technique defined by a depressed but responsive level of consciousness depends on how a particular person's airway, breathing and medical history behave under that depression, which is an individual question and not one a website can answer.

Source: Dental Board of Australia, Conscious Sedation, dentalboard.gov.au (accessed 3 November 2026).

Who is permitted to provide it, and how do you verify that?

Suitability has a second half that patients often overlook: not only whether sedation suits you, but whether the practitioner is permitted to provide it.

The Board's rule is unambiguous. "Only dentists, including dental specialists, whose registration is endorsed for conscious sedation can use this technique in their practice." That endorsement is a separate notation on registration, granted against its own standard, and it carries continuing training obligations — the standard requires an endorsed dentist to complete an approved competency based course in dental sedation and medical emergencies before applying to renew their registration.

Verification is straightforward and does not depend on us. Ahpra publishes a public register of every dental practitioner in Australia, showing current registration status, and recording the specialty of any dentist who holds specialist registration. Before a sedation appointment you can ask who will administer the sedation and by which route, then check that practitioner on the register at ahpra.gov.au.

The Board also expects endorsed dentists to be familiar with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists guidelines on sedation and analgesia for medical, dental or surgical procedures, PS09 (2014). If you want to understand the framework your own care sits inside, that document and the Board's registration standard are the two primary places to look.

Frequently asked questions

Is sleep dentistry the same as being put to sleep under general anaesthetic?

Sleep dentistry is a form of sedation. It produces a drowsy, relaxed, dreamlike state, and you can still respond to questions during the procedure. Your dentist and anaesthetist will explain exactly what to expect for your treatment.

Can anyone have sleep dentistry?

It depends on your health. A dentist assesses whether you are medically suitable, and the anaesthetist also confirms your suitability before the procedure. Please share your full medical history and medicines so the team can plan safely.

Can sleep dentistry help if I am afraid of needles or the dentist?

It can help many people who feel anxious, have dental phobia or dislike needles, sounds or smells. Whether it is right for you is decided after an assessment. Our article on fear of going to the dentist has more ideas.

Can I have several treatments in one sleep dentistry visit?

Sleep dentistry can suit people who need multiple treatments, such as restorations or extractions in different parts of the mouth. Your dentist will advise what can be planned for one visit.

Which Core Dental clinics offer sleep dentistry?

Sleep dentistry is available at selected Core Dental clinics rather than all nine. Call 13 13 16 and our team can tell you where it is offered and help you book an assessment.

Is "sleep dentistry" the regulator's term?

No. The term used by the Dental Board of Australia for the endorsed area of practice is conscious sedation, and the Board defines it as a technique inducing a depression of consciousness during which patients can respond purposefully to verbal commands or light tactile stimulation. "Sleep dentistry" is

the common name for the same service and describes how it tends to feel rather than how it is classified.

Which practitioners may provide conscious sedation?

Only dentists, including dental specialists, whose registration is endorsed for conscious sedation. The Board states this directly. The endorsement is granted against a separate registration standard and is additional to general registration as a dentist, so a dentist without it may not use the technique.

How do I confirm a practitioner holds the endorsement?

Ask which practitioner will administer the sedation and by which route, then look them up on the public Ahpra register of dental practitioners at ahpra.gov.au. The register shows current registration status, and for dentists with specialist registration it also records the specialty. Because registration details change over time, the register is a more reliable check than any page on a practice website.

What guidance do endorsed dentists work to?

Beyond the Board's own registration standard, the Board states that dentists with an endorsement need to be familiar with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists guidelines on sedation and analgesia for diagnostic and interventional medical, dental or surgical procedures, PS09 (2014).

Related services and further reading

What is sleep dentistry?

Sleep dentistry

I have a terrible fear of going to the dentist. What should I do?

Are you anxious about your next treatment?

Help! My kid is frightened of the dentist

Specialist care

Wisdom tooth extraction

What can I expect during my oral surgery recovery?

What to expect at your first Core Dental appointment

How can we help?

If dental visits make you anxious, our team can talk with you about your options at any of our nine Core Dental clinics. Call 13 13 16 or book online, and we will arrange an assessment and let you know which clinics offer sleep dentistry.

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed
Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

This article is general in nature and does not replace advice from a registered dental practitioner who has examined you. Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

How does sleep dentistry work?

Sleep dentistry, also called sedation dentistry, uses sedation to create a drowsy, dreamlike state so you can have dental treatment comfortably. You can still respond to questions, and many people recall little afterwards. Core Dental offers it at selected clinics.

Who assesses whether I am suitable for sleep dentistry?

A dentist assesses you first, and the anaesthetist confirms your suitability before the procedure. Core Dental asks about your medical history and medicines so the team can plan sedation safely for you.

Who monitors me during sleep dentistry?

A specialist anaesthetist monitors you throughout the procedure to look after your wellbeing and comfort. Ask our Core Dental team for details of the sleep dentistry arrangements at your clinic.

Which patients may benefit from sleep dentistry?

It may help people with high dental anxiety or phobia, past traumatic experiences, a strong gag reflex, a fear of needles, difficulty getting numb, jaw problems or a need for multiple treatments. Core Dental will assess whether it suits you.

Will I remember a procedure done with sleep dentistry?

Sleep dentistry generally leaves people with little to no memory of the procedure afterwards, although you can respond to questions during it. Our Core Dental team will explain what to expect on the day.

How many Core Dental clinics are there?

Core Dental has nine clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie. Call 13 13 16 or book online to find the clinic nearest you.

When are Core Dental clinics open?

Our clinics are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings, and closed on Sunday. Saturday hours finish at 1.30pm, and Bayside opens at 8.30am on Saturdays. Call 13 13 16 to confirm your clinic.

How do I ask about sleep dentistry at Core Dental?

Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au and mention that you would like to discuss sleep dentistry. Our team will advise which clinics offer it and arrange an assessment appointment.