


Guideline Implementation: Moderate Sedation/Analgesia

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Purpose/Goal

To provide the learner with knowledge specific to implementing the AORN “Guideline for care of the patient receiving moderate sedation/analgesia.”

Objectives

1. Discuss the RN’s scope of practice related to moderate sedation/analgesia.
2. Describe elements of a preoperative assessment for a patient who may receive moderate sedation/analgesia.
3. Discuss monitoring of the patient undergoing moderate sedation/analgesia.
4. Identify steps the RN should take to ensure safe administration of moderate sedation/analgesia medications.
5. Discuss discharge criteria for a patient who has received moderate sedation/analgesia.

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Jennifer L. Fencl, DNP, RN, CNS, CNOR, has no declared affiliation that could be perceived as posing a potential conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

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ABSTRACT

Moderate sedation/analgesia is practiced in a variety of settings and delivered by a variety of health care providers, with a goal of reducing the patient's anxiety and discomfort during diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. The updated AORN "Guideline for care of the patient receiving moderate sedation/analgesia" provides guidance on RN administration of moderate sedation/analgesia within the scope of nursing practice as defined by the state boards of nursing. The guideline addresses patient selection and assessment, staffing for the procedure, patient monitoring, medication administration, and criteria for postoperative discharge. This article focuses on key points of the guideline to promote safe care throughout the perioperative continuum for a patient receiving moderate sedation/analgesia. Perioperative RNs should review the complete guideline for additional information and for guidance when writing and updating policies and procedures. *AORN J* 103 (May 2016) 501-508.

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Key words: *moderate sedation/analgesia, scope of nursing practice, preoperative assessment, medication administration.*

Procedures requiring sedation have historically been performed in the OR by an anesthesia professional (eg, anesthesiologist, certified RN anesthetist),¹ but evolution in patient care delivery has resulted in an increased demand for provision of moderate sedation and analgesia by nonanesthesia providers in procedural settings. Moderate sedation/analgesia in today's health care environment is performed in a variety of settings (eg, minor procedure rooms, cardiac catheterization laboratories, endoscopy suites, emergency rooms, dentist offices)¹⁻³ and delivered by a variety of health care providers (eg, physician, dentist, RN, physician assistant).^{1,2}

Oftentimes, moderate sedation/analgesia is the preferred intervention for patients undergoing diagnostic and therapeutic procedures for which loss of consciousness is not required (eg, cardiac catheterization, dislocation reduction, endoscopy).⁴⁻⁷ Moderate sedation/analgesia is an effective intervention for

providing a patient with pain relief while also decreasing the patient's level of discomfort and feelings of anxiety during these procedures.^{3,5,8} Perioperative RNs who administer moderate sedation/analgesia must practice within the RN scope of practice as defined by their state's board of nursing and should be knowledgeable and skilled in the safe delivery of moderate sedation/analgesia.

The AORN "Guideline for care of the patient receiving moderate sedation/analgesia"⁹ was updated in December 2015. AORN guideline documents provide guidance based on an evaluation of the strength and quality of the available evidence for a specific subject. The guidelines apply to inpatient and ambulatory settings and are adaptable to all areas where operative and other invasive procedures may be performed. This article elaborates on key takeaways from the guideline document; however, perioperative RNs should review the

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