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Abstract of the Scientific Literature



A "Protocol" for Ketamine Sedation in Children

The purpose of this study was to present an evidence-based clinical practice guideline for the administration of the dissociative agent ketamine for emergency department pediatric procedural sedation and analgesia. Substantial research in recent years has necessitated updates and revisions to the widely disseminated 1990 recommendations. The authors critically discuss indications, contraindications, personnel requirements, monitoring, dosing, coadministered medications, recovery issues, and future research questions for dissociative sedation.

Comments: Ketamine has been used in various dental settings in the past, but its use is widely restricted because it is classified as a general anesthetic agent. Many anesthesia textbooks recommend that only anesthesiologists administer ketamine, and this recommendation has been based on older anesthesia literature. This is an excellent paper that outlines a clear protocol for using ketamine safely. The authors suggest that ketamine be classified differently than other sedation agents because of a fundamentally different mechanism of action in which the thalamoneocortical and limbic systems are "disconnected," effectively dissociating the central nervous system from outside stimuli. Pediatric dentists would be wise to review this and other recent papers about ketamine and to promote changes to pediatric dental residency sedation programs so that the next generation of pediatric dentists will have this drug in their armamentarium. **ARM**

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