

## Common Questions for Doctors

### **“Where did you go to school?”**

“I attended college at \_\_\_\_\_, dental school at \_\_\_\_\_, residency at \_\_\_\_\_, and then we get licensed, certified for anesthesia, and maintain continuing education requirements every year. It’s a lot of education! But it’s necessary to keep our patients safe and to provide the highest quality of care.”

### **“How many of these have you done?”**

“This is actually one of the most common procedures we perform in the office. I’d say we see about \_\_\_\_\_ (number) of these per week. Over the years, that’s *a lot* of procedures.”

### **“How much does this cost?”**

“I’m glad this came up. We’re going to finish going over the details of your condition and the recommendation for treatment. That will show us all the factors involved and the approach we feel is best for you. Once we get through that part, \_\_\_\_\_ (staff member name) is going to continue the consultation by providing specific information about the options, costs, and details of the treatment. We work very hard to ensure the treatment is lasting and affordable. But before you see \_\_\_\_\_ (staff member name), let’s finish going over the medical side of your particular situation, and how we can best take care of your needs.”

### **“How much will I owe?”**

“In many cases, it is necessary to check insurance benefits and specific details before we can provide the most accurate answer. In fact, sometimes a pre-authorization is required, which can affect the eventual outcome. It’s important to verify insurance and complete the necessary documentation before or at the time of the initial interaction, and we do this by gathering insurance information in the initial call and creating a system for collecting as much information as possible.”

It’s important to fully educate the patient on insurance early to avoid future misunderstandings and frustrations. Detailed written information is highly encouraged but should be coupled with an initial conversation that includes the idea that insurance companies go to great lengths to avoid paying claims.

“While we’ve gotten pretty good over the years at maneuvering this game that insurance companies play, we really can’t guarantee any particular outcome when insurance is involved. So we discuss treatment with the idea that the patient is responsible for the entire fee, and we do everything possible to help with the insurance process. But it is important to know that even well-documented information, such as co-pays, patient portions, allowable procedures, etc. are subject to change as far as the insurance company is concerned. So we’re providing our very best estimate in terms of what we’ve researched with the insurance company, but we need to work together to ensure the patient is aware that the responsibility is his/hers. Of course, we will do all we can to maximize your benefits.”

**“When can I schedule the procedure?”**

“We can get you scheduled now! I’m going to have \_\_\_\_\_ (staff member name) work with you to get an appointment set up right away.”

It’s best to have a treatment coordinator/financial coordinator schedule the appointment right then and there.

**“Can I have laughing gas?”**

“Nitrous oxide is available depending on what your treatment entails and what other anesthesia options we consider. We want to ensure you’re comfortable before, throughout, and after the procedure. Let’s talk about what’s recommended for your situation, and you can let me know your preferences so we can tailor a solution to your needs.”

**“Can I have a refill of pain meds?”**

“I will provide you with a prescription for the pain medication recommended for your procedure, but many patients don’t need it or decide not to take all of it because they feel better pretty quickly. You definitely want to keep yourself comfortable, but if you’re still having pain when you get to the end of your pain medication, please give us a call. We’d like to hear more about what’s going on, and we might ask you to come back in to check how things are healing. Of course, if we see that you have a situation that warrants more pain medication, we’ll take care of that when we see you.”

**“When can I work out?”**

“We recommend that you wait for \_\_\_\_\_ days after your procedure to resume your workout routine. Even then, begin with light exertion and build up to normal activity from there. And if you feel any dizziness, light headedness, or discomfort, please discontinue your workout, sit down, and cut back your approach to resuming normal activity levels until you can tolerate exertion.”

**“Can I fly after having this done?”**

“It’s not advisable for you to fly the day of surgery or even within \_\_\_\_\_ days afterwards. It’s best to arrange your travel plans around your surgery so that you can get this taken care of and comfortably travel afterwards.

We’re going to want to see you for a follow up within \_\_\_\_\_ (duration of time). Let me get \_\_\_\_\_ (staff member name) to work with you so we can compare our schedules and find a good time for that follow up.”

**“What foods can I eat?”**

“In general, we recommend a liquid diet for \_\_\_\_\_ hours/days and a soft diet (like mashed potatoes, oatmeal, etc.) for \_\_\_\_\_ days after surgery. Even then, the focus is on keeping the surgical area clean and protected, so avoid chewing directly with that area. If you still experience pain or have any difficulty

eating more substantial foods after \_\_\_\_ days, please contact us and we may want to have you come in for a check.”

**“Do the stitches need to be removed?”**

“Yes, we will remove the sutures for you. Before you leave, we’ll make an appointment for \_\_\_\_\_ (duration of time) from now. That will give us a chance to remove the sutures and check your healing progress.

It’s important that you avoid chewing directly in this area while you have sutures. And while it is important to keep the area as clean as possible, please don’t use a toothpick to pull at the sutures. It’s better to brush very lightly or very gently use a waterpik for careful cleaning.”