



## **Anesthesia Services and Propofol (Diprivan)**

Digestive Health Center is pleased to announce that, in keeping with current medical trends and community standards, Propofol (Diprivan) has been designated as the anesthetic drug of choice for endoscopic procedures at our facility. The overwhelming reasons for this recommendation are safety and efficacy. Propofol is considered the best and safest anesthetic used for endoscopies and colonoscopies.

Propofol is a very short-acting anesthetic that is administered intravenously by a board certified anesthesiologist who also monitors your vital signs, breathing and heart parameters while you are asleep. Propofol causes you to gently fall into a deep sleep that is maintained throughout the procedure, therefore you will not experience any pain or discomfort. After your procedure you will awaken within a few minutes. Unlike other anesthetics, such as the narcotics (namely Demerol and Versed), you will awaken completely and be totally coherent within about 15 minutes from the completion of the procedure. There is no prolonged drowsiness, nausea or vomiting. Side effects associated with Propofol are extremely rare and, in general, it is very well tolerated.

### **Blue Cross and Propofol**

All of the major medical insurance companies pay for Propofol anesthesia for endoscopies and colonoscopies *with the exception of Blue Cross*. Blue Cross has decided that sedation with Propofol is “not medically necessary” and will not pay for an anesthesiologist.

If you choose to undergo your procedure using the “moderate conscious sedation” that is covered by Blue Cross, an anesthesiologist will not be present for your procedure. Instead, the alternative medications will be administered by a nurse who will monitor your vital signs, breathing and cardiac functions throughout the procedure. Typically, you may be able to speak and respond to verbal cues. However, at times the pain experienced while undergoing conscious sedation may be very unpleasant for some patients. The drugs used for conscious sedation may cause side effects such as prolonged drowsiness, dizziness, low blood pressure, nausea and vomiting. Compared to Propofol, the recovery time for conscious sedation is considerably longer.

**If you have Blue Cross insurance and would prefer the recommended Propofol anesthesia,** you will be asked to pay for the charges associated with an anesthesiologist on the day of your procedure. Please be prepared to pay \$295 for your Propofol anesthesia services when you check in on the day of your procedure. Propofol services for a double procedure will be \$325. Thank you for trusting us with your health care needs and please call us at (805) 492-9000 if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Alister A. George, M.D.  
Medical Director