

# Palliative sedation at the end of life

## When is it performed?

Palliative sedation is offered at the end of life, when there is intolerable suffering due to symptoms and/or severe distress that are not otherwise sufficiently relieved.



## What is it?

The level of consciousness of the patient is reduced in order to relieve intolerable suffering. Midazolam is an example of medicine that is used.



## Team approach

It should only be started after consultation with a team with specialist expertise in palliative sedation. For complex patients, this team can advise the treating team and help with follow-up.



## Anticipation and aftercare

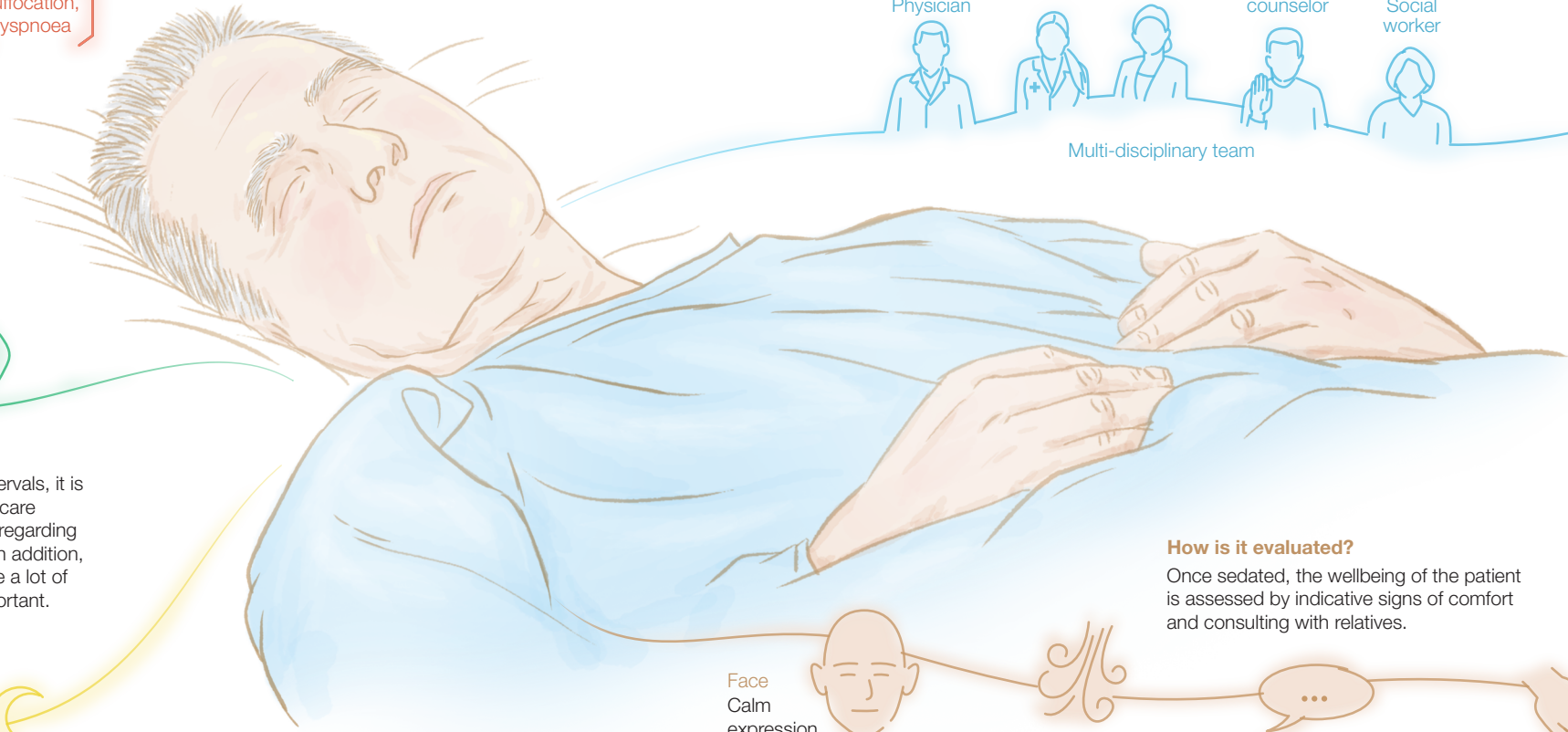
In advanced disease, at regular intervals, it is good practice to find out patients' care preferences and talk with relatives regarding treatment and palliative sedation. In addition, the death of a loved one can cause a lot of grief and aftercare is therefore important.

## Proportionality

Palliative sedation has to be proportional to the relief of intolerable suffering required in each patient.

It can be:

- Light / Deep
- Intermittent / Continuous



## How is it evaluated?

Once sedated, the wellbeing of the patient is assessed by indicative signs of comfort and consulting with relatives.

Face  
Calm  
expression

Breathing  
Slow and silent

Voice  
No negative  
vocalizations

Body  
Relaxed

## Palliative Sedation practice

This medical practice does not intend to shorten life: death happens naturally. Palliative sedation relieves patient's intolerable suffering at the end of life, which is a common concern.

