

intranasal midazolam ([Arlachov and Ganatra, 2012](#)). Propofol is a good sedating agent for diagnostic procedures because of its short induction and recovery time, but the medication can cause respiratory depression and apnea with little warning and should be administered only by trained personnel, such as anesthesiologists ([Arlachov and Ganatra, 2012](#)). (See [Pain Management, Chapter 5](#).)

Children need continual support and reinforcement during procedures in which they remain conscious. Vital signs and physiologic responses to the procedure are monitored throughout. The nurse should review written instructions with parents if the child is discharged after a procedure. Children who have undergone a procedure with a general anesthetic require post anesthesia care, including positioning, to prevent aspiration of secretions and frequent assessment of the vital signs and LOC. In addition, other neurologic functions such as pupillary responses, motor strength, and movement are tested at regular intervals. Any surgical wound resulting from the test is checked for bleeding, CSF leakage, and other complications. Children who undergo repeated subdural taps should have their hematocrit monitored to detect excessive blood loss from the procedure.

The Child with Cerebral Compromise

Nursing Care of the Unconscious Child

The unconscious child requires nursing attention, with observation, recording, and evaluation of changes in objective signs. These observations provide valuable information regarding the patient's progress and often serve as a guide to diagnosis and treatment. Therefore, careful and detailed observations are essential for the child's welfare. In addition, vital functions must be maintained and complications prevented through conscientious and meticulous nursing care. The outcome of unconsciousness is variable and ranges from early and complete recovery, to death within a few hours or days, or persistent and permanent unconsciousness, or recovery with varying degrees of residual mental or physical disability. The outcome and recovery of the unconscious child may depend on the level of nursing care and observational skills.

Direct emergency measures toward ensuring a patent circulation,