

**Table 2. Characteristics of selected intravenous medications used for sedation of adult patients in the intensive care unit.**<sup>6,7,9,12,13</sup>

Agent	FDA Labeled Indications	Pharmacology	Onset of Action (min)	Duration of Action (hours)	Half-life (hours)	Active Metabolite
Dexmedetomidine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short term sedation (<math>\leq</math> 24 hours) of adult mechanically ventilated patients in critical care settings</li> <li>• procedural sedation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CNS receptors: sedation, analgesia, hypotension, decreased heart rate</li> <li>• peripheral receptors: vasoconstriction, hypertension</li> </ul>	30	4	2	No
Diazepam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anxiety</li> <li>• adjunct for status epilepticus and severe recurrent convulsive seizures</li> <li>• preoperative sedation</li> <li>• adjunct to cardioversion</li> <li>• endoscopic procedural sedation</li> <li>• muscle spasms or spasticity</li> <li>• acute agitation, tremor, delirium tremens, and hallucinosis during acute alcohol withdrawal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sedation, hypnosis, anterograde amnesia</li> </ul>	1–5	0.25–1	20–120	Yes
Lorazepam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anxiety</li> <li>• preoperative sedation, anxiolysis, and anterograde amnesia</li> <li>• status epilepticus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sedation, hypnosis, anterograde amnesia</li> </ul>	5–20	6–8	12	No
Midazolam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sedation in critical care settings</li> <li>• preoperative sedation, anxiolysis, and anterograde amnesia</li> <li>• procedural sedation</li> <li>• induction and maintenance of anesthesia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anesthesia, sedation, hypnosis, amnesia</li> </ul>	1–5	<2*	1–4	Yes
Propofol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sedation in mechanically ventilated patients in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anesthesia, sedation, hypnosis,</li> </ul>	0.5 - 1	0.05-0.17	1.5-12.4	No

	critical care settings <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• induction and maintenance of anesthesia</li><li>• monitored anesthesia care sedation</li></ul>	amnesia				
--	---	---------	--	--	--	--

\*The pharmacologic effect of midazolam may last up to 6 hours in some patients.