

Table 2. Characteristics of selected intravenous medications used for sedation of adult patients in the intensive care unit.^{6,7,9,12,13}

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

	critical care settings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• induction and maintenance of anesthesia• monitored anesthesia care sedation	amnesia				
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*The pharmacologic effect of midazolam may last up to 6 hours in some patients.