



INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS RECEIVING NITROUS OXIDE/OXYGEN

Nitrous oxide (or laughing gas) is a colorless and virtually odorless blend of 2 gases with a faint, sweet smell. When inhaled, it is absorbed by the body and has a calming effect. It is an effective agent for lessening pain and anxiety. It generally works well in children who have some degree of cooperation. Most children are enthusiastic about the administration of nitrous oxide/oxygen; they often report feeling happy or feel like they are 'floating or flying'. If your child is worried by the sights, sounds or sensations of dental treatment, he or she may respond more positively with its use. For some patients, however, the feeling of "losing control" may be troubling; claustrophobic patients may find the nasal hood confining and unpleasant. Children who have severe anxiety, nasal congestion, extensive treatment needs or discomfort wearing a nasal mask will not benefit from nitrous oxide/oxygen.

Nitrous oxide takes effect and wears off rapidly (2-3 minutes) with normal breathing. Your child will have minimal impairment of any reflexes. Since the gas effects wear off almost immediately after it is turned off, your child can go home as soon as he/she is ready.

Acute and chronic adverse effects to nitrous oxide are rare. It is non-addictive. It is mild, easily taken and your child remains fully conscious. The most common side effects are nausea and vomiting. These are usually prevented by following the pre-operative instructions given to you prior to the appointment.

THE OBJECTIVES OF NITROUS OXIDE/OXYGEN SEDATION ARE:

- 1) To reduce or eliminate pain and/or anxiety;
- 2) To reduce the unpleasantness associated with dental treatment;
- 3) To enhance communication and patient cooperation;
- 4) To increase tolerance for longer appointments;
- 5) To reduce gagging.

BEFORE YOUR CHILD'S APPOINTMENT

- Your child should not have anything to eat 2 hours before his/her appointment. The meal should be light and easily digestible. Avoid foods such as rice or pasta, and fatty foods.
- Contact us prior to the appointment if there has been a change to your child's general health (such as a stuffy nose, cough, cold, flu, fever, etc).
- Please ensure that your child does not wear any nail polish as it may interfere with the monitoring equipment. Comfortable, short-sleeve clothing should be worn.

FOLLOWING YOUR CHILD'S APPOINTMENT

> activity:

- Most children can resume normal activity after having nitrous oxide/oxygen sedation.
- If your child feels dizzy after the sedation, watch them closely and have them relax at home if necessary.

> diet:

- You will be notified if local anesthetic has been used during the procedure. It usually takes 2-3 hours to completely wear off. Make sure you monitor your child closely to avoid any lip or tongue biting, which could lead to ulceration.
- After the numbing wears off, your child can eat and drink normally.

> pain:

- If local anesthetic was used during the procedure, he/she should not experience any pain or discomfort until the numbing wears off.
- If he/she complains of pain, regular strength children's Tylenol or Advil is usually sufficient