



THAMES RIVER FAMILY DENTISTRY

NITROUS OXIDE – INFORMATION SHEET

Nitrous Oxide- what is it?

Nitrous Oxide (“laughing gas or N₂O”) is a gas that is used as an effective method of relieving anxiety and fear of dental treatment and needles. It is effective on most patients and is frequently used, especially on young patients who require dental treatment.

Nitrous Oxide is a conscious anesthetic and during its use the patient remains awake and responsive to communication at all times. The effects of nitrous oxide are fully reversible and we make sure that our patients are fully recovered upon leaving. Some young patients may feel tired following the appointment and nap.

Absolute contraindication:

Poor medical health. E.g. – PATIENT WALKS IN CARRYING OXYGEN TANK.

- PREGNANCY – can cause abortion (especially during 1st Trimester).
- BOWEL OBSTRUCTION – MEDICAL EMERGENCY, YOU MUST SEE A MEDICAL DOCTOR ASAP
Common causes: Scar tissue in intestine
Tumor in intestine
Crohn’s Disease
Hernia
Severe Constipation
- Recent SURGERY (in past 6 months) in closed spaces such as EYES or MIDDLE EAR
- BLEOMYCIN (injectable chemotherapeutic drug) – Increased toxicity (fibrosis) in presence of high conc. of oxygen.

Relative contraindications:

- Patients with persistent nasal congestion or obstruction or who are unable to breathe comfortably through their nose.
- Pulmonary hypertension
- High Intracranial pressure – Symptoms: Headache, Blurred vision, Orthopnea, Syncope
- Folate deficiency (Vit. B12) – N₂O reduces the synthesis of Folic acid (N₂O CAN NOT BE USED FOR MORE THAN 2HRS.)
 - METHOTREXATE therapy
- Predisposition to nausea and vomiting – Ask your family doctor to prescribe anti-nausea medication. E.g. Zofran 4mg, Take 1 Tab orally before using N₂O.

Precautions of Nitrous Oxide:

- 1) **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING FOR 3 HOURS PRIOR TO YOUR APPOINTMENT!**
- 2) **An early morning appointment is preferable for patients under 12 years of age. Appointments between 8 a.m-11 a.m are ideal.**
- 3) **Notify us of any changes in your medical history or medications.**

Procedure:

Nitrous Oxide is given through a mask that fits over the patient's nose. The patient is asked to breathe through their nose and effects usually begin within 5 minutes. Following the procedure the patient is asked to breathe 100% oxygen for 5 minutes to fully eliminate the nitrous oxide from the body.

Should you have any questions please call our office at (519) 352 - 2200

Our goal is to make your dental visit a positive experience!