

Inhalation sedation



Information for patients

Community and Special Care Dentistry



Inhalation sedation

Your dentist has talked to you about having dental treatment with the help of inhalation sedation. This leaflet will describe what is meant by inhalation sedation, how it will make you feel and what instructions you will need to follow.

Inhalation sedation is used to relax patients and provide pain relief during dental treatment. It is not suitable for use in very young children, or if you have certain medical conditions. It is often used during childbirth.

How will I be sedated?

The dentist will first check your medical history and that you understand what treatment is to be done.

When you are ready you will be asked to place a small mask over your nose. At first you will breathe pure oxygen. Gradually, when you are ready, the dentist will introduce a small amount of the sedating gas (nitrous oxide) into the mask.

You will begin to feel pleasantly light-headed and relaxed. You will breathe the sedating gas during all of the treatment. During the treatment the dental staff will reassure you and answer any questions that you have. You may stop the dentist at any time during the treatment.

Will the gas put me to sleep?

No, you will be awake, but relaxed, during all of the treatment.

How will I be monitored?

Your breathing will be monitored throughout by the dental staff. They may use a pulse oximeter. This machine has a peg that fits onto the end of your finger and tells us about your pulse as well as the oxygen in your blood. You may be asked to remove nail polish to allow the machine to work properly.

What happens after the treatment?

At the end of treatment you will rest for 5 minutes and breathe pure oxygen. The sedating gas is breathed out straight away and after a short time you will feel back to normal.

Is there anything I should avoid?

You will usually be allowed to resume normal activities at once.

You should eat and drink as normal before your appointment and do not need to be accompanied by someone else unless you would find it helpful.

You do need to be able to breathe through your nose, so you must tell the clinic if you are suffering from a cold or hayfever.

Who do I speak to if I have any questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about your dental treatment the dental staff will be happy to talk with you. Please contact them on your usual clinic telephone number.



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