

### What is Nitrous Oxide Sedation?

Nitrous Oxide is a blend of two gases- oxygen and nitrous oxide. Nitrous oxide is the mildest form of sedation that we use during dental procedures.

### How Safe is Nitrous Oxide?



Very safe. Nitrous oxide is perhaps the safest sedative used in dentistry. Nitrous oxide is a mild sedative that can be easily controlled, does not affect heart rate, and has no ill effects on the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, or brain. Nitrous oxide has no odor, is easily reversible, can be adjusted in various concentrations and is non-allergenic. Used in combination with oxygen, does not in any way disrupt normal breathing. Your child remains fully conscious and he/she will be capable of responding to a question or request.

### How is Nitrous Oxide Delivered?

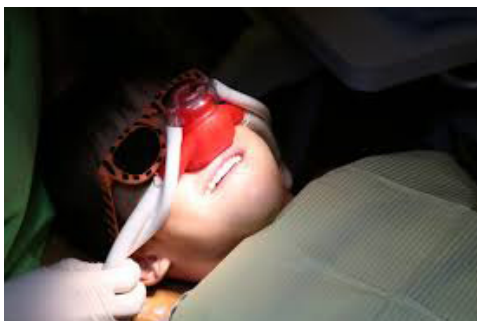
If your child needs nitrous oxide (commonly known as “laughing gas”), we simply fit a small, disposable mask over his nose and request that he or she breathe normally. As long as your child is comfortable wearing the soft mask and breathing through his nose, he or she should have no problem.

Because nitrous oxide is so safe and easy to use, we can use it for simple cleanings if your child is very anxious or has had a negative experience at the dentist's in the past. However, it is used most commonly for more involved procedures like filling cavities.

At the end of treatment, it is eliminated after a short period of breathing oxygen and has no lingering effects.



### What Effect Will Nitrous Oxide Have on My Child?



Your child will not feel overly drowsy, simply relaxed, happy and comfortable. Nitrous oxide is called “laughing gas” because patients often feel a little giddy and get the “giggles”. It will not prevent your child from understanding and responding to instructions at all points during the visit. Nitrous oxide actually enhances communication between your child, Dr. Laura, and the assistant during the dental procedure. Your child's arms or legs may feel “tingly” or “heavy”, but he or she will be able to move. The effects of nitrous oxide go away just a few minutes

after the mask is removed, so there is little to no recovery time before your child is feeling back to normal. There are no lingering side effects once nitrous administration is discontinued.

Nitrous oxide does not significantly take away sensation for your child; instead, it simply reduces pain and helps to ease feelings of fear and anxiety about the procedure as well as having to sit in the dentist's chair for a longer period of time than usual. During any invasive or complex dental procedure, we use local anesthesia at the site to numb the tooth (in addition to the pain-relieving effects of laughing gas) so your child will feel as comfortable as possible.

### **Are There Any Special Instructions For Nitrous Oxide?**

1. You may feed your child a small amount of food or in the two hours preceding the dental visit, or arrive with an empty stomach. Occasionally, nausea or vomiting occur when a child has a full stomach.
2. Please tell us about any respiratory conditions that may make breathing through the nose difficult for your child, as it may limit the effectiveness of nitrous oxide.
3. Make sure to let us know if your child is taking any medication on the day of the appointment.

### **Is My Child a Candidate for Nitrous Oxide Sedation?**

If your child is anxious about visiting the dentist or is coming in for a filling or other procedure, we'll explain in kid-friendly terms what we're going to do, why the laughing gas will help relax them, and how it will make them feel. Before we begin, both you and your child should feel completely comfortable and prepared for us to begin the procedure or cleaning using nitrous oxide. Nitrous oxide may sometimes make a child feel nauseous. It is recommended to feed your child only liquids or a light meal a few hours beforehand. Often, laughing gas helps children feel better about coming back to the dentist for the next visit!

### **Are There Any Side Effects to My Child Getting Nitrous Oxide?**

Children are, of course not all alike, and all of our dental services are tailored specifically to your child. In a very small percentage of children Nitrous oxide may not be effective, especially those children who have severe anxiety, nasal congestion or discomfort wearing a nasal mask. We will review your child's medical history, level of anxiety, and treatment needs and inform you if nitrous oxide/oxygen is recommended for your child.

**\*\*\*INFORM OUR OFFICE REGARDING ANY RESPIRATORY CONDITION THAT MAKES BREATHING THROUGH THE NOSE DIFFICULT FOR YOUR CHILD\*\*\***

If your child is opposed to wearing a mask, or if your child has a stuffy nose during the day of the visit, then nitrous oxide/oxygen may not be the best option for other types of behavior management techniques. Dr. Laura will then be able to consult with you as to what the best alternative method would be.