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All you need to know about Inhalation Sedation

Information for your safe and
comfortable treatment

Call centre opening hours

Monday - Thursday
8.30am - 5.00pm

Friday
8.30am - 4.30pm

Tel: 0333 405 0290

(Smile:Together)

Tackling oral health inequality for
healthier happier communities

Introduction

We hope to use sedation at your next visit. Here are some simple instructions, which we would like you to follow carefully before and after your treatment.

Relative analgesia sedation is also called laughing gas, RA, inhalation sedation or nitrous oxide sedation. It is a way of making dental care more pleasant for nervous patients. It is not the same as a general anaesthetic or 'gas'.

This sedation technique works by breathing oxygen and nitrous oxide gases through a nosepiece. This will not cover your mouth.

This is a very comfortable way for anxious patients to have dental treatment.

The dental team may use other related techniques, such as reassurance and hypnotic suggestion. The gases will make you feel very calm and relaxed. Some people report feeling relaxed, giggly, tingly, warm, dreamy, floaty or heavy. You will stay awake and in control of all of your reflexes, such as coughing.

You will be aware of what is going on but you should not feel anxious about it.

The risks associated with this type of sedation are minimal; your dentist will discuss these with you.

If you are pregnant or think you might be, please let the dental team know. You may need to come back to have your dental treatment later in your pregnancy or after your baby is born. A responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 16 years.

The dental team will have monitoring equipment for patient safety. The dental team are appropriately trained in the use of sedative drugs and life support, and are fully trained and regularly updated in the use of this sedation technique.

Before your appointment

Please follow these instructions. If you do not, your appointment will be cancelled.

- You must be able to breathe well through your nose because you need to breathe the sedation gases through your nose. If this is difficult because of a cold, blocked nose or breathing difficulties, your appointment will need to be rearranged.
- Please have a light, low-fat meal 2 hours before your appointment.
- It is really important to remove any jewellery or facial jewellery e.g. tongue and nose studs before your treatment.
- Please bring all medicine and inhalers to your appointment. Inform the dentist if your medication has changed since your last visit.
- Patients who feel anxious often feel better if they have a friend or family member to offer support to them.
- Once you are sedated the dentist may use local anaesthetic. First a topical anaesthetic paste will be used to numb the area requiring dental treatment to make the treatment more comfortable.
- It is very important to concentrate on breathing in and out during the treatment.
- Whilst doing this, put your hands on your tummy to feel it rise and fall as you breathe slowly.

Relaxation, breathing and distraction exercise

Breathe slowly with a steady rhythm. Please practise this breathing exercise at home:

- Count to three as you take in a deep breath
- Hold your breath as you count to three
- Breathe out as you count to three; as you are breathing out, you will feel your body relax

Whilst doing so...

Think of something that you really enjoy, for example walking, reading, listening to music, relaxing on the beach, sitting by the pool or playing sports. Perhaps imagine playing a favourite game or watching your favourite TV programme. You could imagine lifting your mind above your body and looking down, watching yourself in a detached way, as if someone else were having the treatment.

After your sedation treatment

You are unlikely to have any side effects such as feeling sick or having a headache.

At the end of your dental treatment, you will be given some extra oxygen to breathe. This will speed up your recovery from the effects of sedation, and make you feel more alert. Sometimes patients can feel tired after their treatment; this is because you have relaxed and your anxiety levels have reduced.

You may be asked to wait at the clinic after your sedation, so the dental team can be sure you are safe to return home. This may be as long as 30 minutes after the end of your treatment. Please do not leave until the dentist or dental nurse confirms you can.

You may drive home once the dentist has discharged you.

Please ensure you follow the post-operative instructions on how to care for your mouth after your treatment.