

Informed Consent for Nitrous Oxide Sedation



Patient Name: _____ Date: _____

Introduction

Nitrous oxide is a colourless, slightly sweet gas that is used during dental treatment for relaxation and anxiety relief. When inhaled, it can induce feelings of euphoria and sedation. It also can produce sensations of drowsiness, warmth, and tingling in the hands, feet, and/or about the mouth. In the dental setting, it will not induce unconsciousness. It has limitations and risks, absolute success cannot be guaranteed. It is a drug-induced state of reduced awareness, and decreased ability to respond. It is not sleep. You will be able to swallow, talk, and cough as needed. Your ability to respond normally returns when the effects of the sedative wear off.

Alternatives to conscious sedation are:

- A) No sedation: The treatment is performed under local anesthetic with the patient fully aware.
- B) Oral conscious sedation: Sedation via a pill form that will put the patient in a minimally depressed level of consciousness.
- C) Intravenous sedation: Injection of the sedative in a tube connected to a vein in your arm
- D) General Anesthetic: Commonly called deep sedation or “sleep” dentistry; a patient has no awareness and must have their breathing temporarily supported

Contraindications

Please let us know if you have any of the following medical conditions, because we may not be able to safely use nitrous oxide: Congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic bronchitis, emphysema, chronic asthma, bronchiectasis, pregnancy, hepatitis B or C, tuberculosis, macrocytic anemia, immune diseases, respiratory disease, middle ear infections, or a history of substance abuse. Also, if you suffer from claustrophobia, you may choose not to use nitrous oxide.

Effects

The administration of medication and the performance of conscious sedation with nitrous oxide carries certain common hazards, risks, and potential unpleasant side effects which are infrequent, but none the less, may occur. They include but are not limited to the following:

- A) Nausea and Vomiting: This is the most frequent of the side effects of nitrous oxide sedation but its frequency is still quite low. It is important to tell the doctor, hygienist, or assistant that you are experiencing some discomfort. The level of nitrous oxide can be adjusted to eliminate this side effect.
- B) Excessive Perspiration: Sweating may occur during the procedure and you may become somewhat flushed during administration of nitrous oxide.
- C) Behavioral Problems: Some patients will talk excessively. You may become difficult to treat because you are so talkative, or experience vivid dreams associated with physical movement of the body.
- D) Shivering: Although not common, shivering can be quite uncomfortable. Shivering usually develops at the end of the sedative procedure when the nitrous oxide has been terminated.
- E) Driving a Motor Vehicle: You may not feel capable of driving after nitrous oxide. If this occurs, we will keep you until you feel better or have you call a friend or cab to insure your safety. I have had the opportunity to discuss conscious sedation and have all my questions answered by qualified personnel including the doctor.

Preoperative guidelines

Nitrous oxide is administered through a nasal mask. You must be able to breathe through the nose (blocked nasal passages, colds, etc.). **Avoid eating at least THREE HOURS prior to the dental appointment.** Avoid caffeinated products before coming in for treatment. Nitrous oxide can cause “stomach butterflies” (nausea), which may result in vomiting. On the day of your appointment, do not take any antidepressants (unless your dentist is aware of them), or other sedatives, unless prescribed by your dentist.

Instructions during nitrous oxide use

Your mask must remain firmly in place during the entire period. Do not breathe through your mouth. Breathe through the nose only. Notify the doctor if you are experiencing difficulty in breathing through your nose. No talking is allowed while nitrous oxide is being used. Talking blows nitrous oxide into the room, lessening the desired effect for you, and exposing the dental staff to the nitrous effects. You will also have blood oxygen level monitor connected to your finger throughout the treatment. Near the end of your treatment, you will receive oxygen through your mask for at least 15 minutes.

Postoperative guidelines

Recovery from nitrous oxide sedation is rapid. The gas will be flushed from your system with oxygen. If you feel dizzy after the sedation, remain seated, and the sensation should pass in a few minutes. Do not leave the office until your head feels clear, , and you are able to function (i.e., walk and drive) safely.

I Give My Consent:

- I have had the opportunity to discuss conscious sedation and have all my questions answered by qualified personnel including the doctor.
- I understand that I must notify the doctor if I am pregnant, or if I am lactating. I must notify the doctor if I have sensitivity to any medication, of my present mental and physical condition, if I have recently consumed alcohol, and if I am presently on psychiatric mood altering drugs or other medications.
- I hereby certify that I understand this authorization and the reasons for nitrous oxide/oxygen sedation and associated risks. I am aware that the practice of dentistry is not an exact science.
- I acknowledge that every effort will be made in my behalf for a positive outcome from sedation, but no guarantees have been made to the result of the procedure authorized above.

_____ Date _____
Patient signature/legally authorized representative

_____ Relationship _____
Printed name, if signed on behalf of the patient

Patient's Height: _____ Patient's Weight: _____

_____ Date _____
Dentist Signature

_____ Date _____
Witness Signature

