



# GREAT SMILES

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY & ORTHODONTICS

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## NITROUS OXIDE (Laughing Gas)

Most children are calm, comfortable, and confident in our pediatric dental office, because we specialize in treating children. We make them feel special and our office is especially designed for children and adolescents. Sometimes, however, a child feels anxious during treatment. Your child may need more support than a gentle, caring manner to feel comfortable. Nitrous Oxide is a safe, effective technique that our practice offers to calm a child's fear of the dental visit. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recognizes Nitrous Oxide/Oxygen inhalation as a safe and effective technique to reduce anxiety, produce analgesia, and enhance effective communication between a patient and health care provider.

### **What is Nitrous Oxide?**

Nitrous Oxide is a blend of two gases - Oxygen and Nitrous Oxide. When inhaled it is absorbed by the body and has a calming effect. Normal breathing of 100% oxygen after treatment eliminates Nitrous Oxide from the body.

### **How will my child feel when breathing Nitrous Oxide?**

We will give your child the opportunity to choose a "flavor" of air to breathe. Your child will smell this "flavored air" and experience a sense of well-being and relaxation. If the sights, sounds, or sensations of dental treatment worry your child, he or she may respond more positively with the use of Nitrous Oxide.

### **How safe is Nitrous Oxide?**

Very safe! Nitrous Oxide is perhaps the safest sedative in dentistry. It is non-addictive. It is mild, easily taken, and then quickly eliminated from the body. Your child remains fully conscious and keeps all natural reflexes when breathing Nitrous Oxide.

Nitrous Oxide has an excellent safety record. When administered by trained personnel on carefully selected patients with appropriate equipment and technique, Nitrous Oxide is a safe and effective agent for providing pharmacological guidance of behavior in children.

### **Are there any special instructions for Nitrous Oxide?**

We may recommend your child be given little or no food before the dental visit (occasionally, nausea or vomiting occurs when a child has a full stomach). Second, tell us about any respiratory condition that makes breathing through the nose difficult for your child (a common cold, asthma, sinus problem, etc.). It may limit the effectiveness of Nitrous Oxide. Third, tell us if your child is taking any medication on the day of the appointment.

### **Adverse effects of Nitrous Oxide/Oxygen inhalation?**

Adverse effects of Nitrous Oxide on the patient are rare. Nausea and vomiting are the most common adverse effects, usually occurring when the child has a full stomach. Headaches and disorientation can be avoided by administering 100% oxygen after Nitrous Oxide has been discontinued.

### **Will Nitrous Oxide work for all children?**

We know that all children are not alike. Every service is tailored to your child as an individual. Nitrous Oxide is NOT effective for some children, especially those who have severe anxiety (often those younger than 5 years old), large tonsils and adenoids resulting in being a mouth breather, nasal congestion, or extensive treatment needs. Our doctors have comprehensive specialty training and can offer other sedation methods that are right for your child.