

NITROUS OXIDE SEDATION

Nitrous oxide is an anesthetic gas often referred to as "laughing gas." It will be given to your child during medical procedures to reduce the discomfort, pain, and stress these procedures can cause. For many years now, nitrous oxide has been regularly used in both adults and children in a variety of situations (such as during childbirth, in dental clinics, and in emergency rooms).



PRIOR TO THE MEDICAL PROCEDURE

The use of nitrous oxide requires a nurse or medical staff member with the appropriate training. They will place a mask directly on your child's face, covering the face and mouth. The mask can be a little intimidating, especially for the younger children. On the other hand, once the nitrous oxide has started taking effect, the mask won't bother them.

Children don't need to be fasting. Nitrous oxide cause nausea or vomiting in a minority of people. Fasting does not prevent this side effect. If your child gets nauseous, the nursing or medical staff will stop the nitrous oxide to assess the situation.

What you need to know

It's often helpful to let children touch and look at the mask before it's put on their face to familiarize them with the equipment. You can also practice breathing through the mask with them before the nitrous oxide is started. Children can also choose a scent (chocolate or vanilla, for example) that is diffused inside the mask to make the experience more pleasant.

DURING THE PROCEDURE

Nitrous oxide begins acting in 2 to 3 minutes. During use, your child will remain conscious and breathe normally. The child might continue to interact and talk with the people around them or remain calm and quiet. This means you can talk about a variety of topics or use games to distract them.

AFTER THE PROCEDURE

Once the procedure is over, your child will receive oxygen for 2 to 3 minutes. This completely eliminates the nitrous oxide from their body. Most children return to their usual state 10 minutes or less after the gas has been turned off. Your child might not remember some or all of the procedure.

It is important that:

- Your child remain in the hospital or in their bed until a nurse or medical staff member tells you it's safe for the child to move around.
- Your child avoid engaging in sports, going to a playground, driving vehicles, or operating mechanical equipment for the rest of the day, since their balance and coordination might be impaired for a short period of time.
- If your child leaves the hospital, they must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

Don't hesitate to discuss this with the nursing or medical staff responsible for your child before giving your consent to the use of nitrous oxide.

Make sure you understand the reasons for using nitrous oxide for your child, and the possible risks and benefits associated with its use.

Source

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