

# Nitrous Oxide / Laughing Gas Sedation Guidelines

Please read these directions carefully and ensure that you understand them prior to allowing your child to receive Nitrous Oxide (Laughing Gas) sedation. Any questions should be discussed with the dentist or staff.

## Effects of Nitrous Oxide

- Nitrous oxide gas is a safe drug and your child will only be given the correct amount to relax him or her. Oxygen is always given at the same time through a mask that fits on the nose. The nitrous oxide will **NOT** put your child to sleep. It **ONLY** relaxes the child.
- For the gas to work, your child **MUST** be able to breathe the gas through his/her nose. If your child has a serious cold and congestion, the appointment may need to be rescheduled.
- If your child cannot consistently breathe through the nose or they start to cry, they will very quickly lose the effect of the laughing gas and the **sedation will not work**.
- **Local anesthesia**, ie, an injection to numb the tooth and gums is usually **still required**.

## Complications of Nitrous Oxide

Nitrous oxide is very safe and serious complications are extremely rare. There is a very small chance of nausea and your child may be more emotional after the appointment is finished. Pressure from the mask can leave a pressure mark on the nose / face and will go away very shortly after the mask is removed.

## Arriving and Leaving the Office

All children and teenagers **MUST** be accompanied to and from the office by their parent or legal guardian. Teenagers are **NOT** allowed to drive after receiving nitrous oxide for the remainder of the day.

## Eating, Drinking, and Preparation

- Your child **must not eat or drink for 2 hours before the nitrous oxide appointment**.
- Please arrive on time, or before time if your child needs to go to the bathroom prior to the start of the appointment. If we start late, treatment may need to be rushed or cut short.
- Please remove nail polish. A pulse oximeter will be placed on the finger to measure oxygen level & pulse.
- Please remove any pony tails or bun in your child's hair or else their head will not be stable laying back in the dental chair.

## Parental / Caregiver Involvement During Nitrous Oxide Administration

Most parents or caregivers are concerned when or if their child is to receive any form of sedation, which includes nitrous oxide. It is crucial that the parent is aware of the following:

- A parent should be **strictly an observer**, in order for the dentist to be able to communicate with and guide your child during treatment.
- Parents are requested **to limit talking to the child** during the administration of the nitrous oxide so that your child can be more attentive to communication with the dentist and his team.
- The parent should sit on a chair provided. Please **do not** hover over or approach the child. By hovering you communicate to your child through body language that you are anxious.
- We encourage you to stay and your child during treatment. However, if you find observing too stressful, you are welcome to remain in the reception area until the treatment has been completed.

## Post-operative Observation and Activities

Please keep your child under supervision and avoid exertion until your child is back to regular activity (usually within an hour or two).

