

# Inhalation Sedation: Parents or those with Parental Responsibility for Children and Young People Aged under 16 Years

## Specialist Dental Services

**Patient Information Leaflet**



## What is inhalation sedation?

The child in your care may require dental treatment under inhalation sedation. This will help the child feel less anxious, slightly drowsy and more relaxed for the dental treatment. Inhalation sedation does not make the child unconscious. The child remains awake but may feel warm and detached. The child's memory of the treatment afterwards may be slightly reduced.

Inhalation sedation means that the child will breathe a mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen from a nosepiece placed on the nose. This will have a relaxing effect.

## Benefits and risks of inhalation sedation

Inhalation sedation is used to reduce anxiety and fear of dental treatment. This makes the child more co-operative. This is particularly helpful if the child is having a longer, uncomfortable or more complicated procedure. It is a widely used technique.

The dentist and members of the dental team are trained to give sedation. They watch the child closely and treat any problems that may develop. The nitrous oxide is completely breathed out of the body within 30 minutes of the end of the treatment. This means that the child can recover very quickly from this type of sedation.

The dentist will give the child some oxygen at the end of the sedation to help prevent the child feeling a bit sick or having a headache.

The child will be asked to wait until the dentist has checked that he or she has fully recovered from the sedation. The child will not be allowed to go home with you until the dentist has checked this.

## What to expect

It is usual to have two or more appointments. At the first appointment (assessment), the dentist will take a full dental history of the child. Various methods of providing the dental treatment with or without sedation will be explained. Other than in an emergency, the treatment will take place at the second or subsequent appointments.

If it is agreed that dental treatment with inhalation sedation is the best way to treat the child, then the dentist will confirm the child's medical history. If further information is required, the child's general medical practitioner or specialist will be contacted.

## How to prepare your child

Before the treatment, the child in your care can eat normally but with only a light meal being taken up to 2 hours before the treatment. Please give the child any routine medicines as normal. Any medicines or inhalers that the child may need should be brought to the dental treatment appointment.

Written consent will be required from the parent/carer before any treatment can be given to the child. If you have agreed and signed the consent form at the assessment appointment, and you are then unable to attend on the day of the treatment, the child must be accompanied by a responsible adult (over 18 years of age).

The child should wear loose, comfortable clothing. No valuables should be brought to the appointment.

If the child is unwell on the day with cold/flu symptoms or any contagious illness, please contact the dentist for advice. The appointment may need to be rearranged.

Please avoid bringing other children with you on the day of treatment.

## What will happen during the sedation?

During the procedure, the child will breathe the nitrous oxide and oxygen through a nosepiece on the nose. The child may feel warm with tingly fingers and toes.

Once the child is sedated, and feels drowsy and relaxed, the dentist can use local analgesia (pain relief that numbs the site of the dental treatment). Local anaesthetic as a paste is sometimes used to numb the site of the treatment. Any injections that the child may need can then be given through this numbed area to reduce the chance of any discomfort.

When the dental treatment is completed, the nitrous oxide mixture will be stopped and replaced with oxygen. The nosepiece will be taken off, and the child will be sat up in the dentist's chair and will continue to recover fully for a few minutes. The dentist or a member of the dental team will monitor the child during recovery.

The child will be able to leave the surgery/dental practice once he or she has fully recovered, is alert and is not feeling dizzy. This usually takes about 30 minutes after the treatment has ended. The child will be checked by the dentist before being allowed to go home.

The child may not participate in organised or active sports for the rest of the day but may be able to return to school. The dentist will discuss this with you.

The child can eat and drink normally after the treatment but care should be taken if areas of the mouth are still numb to avoid lip, cheek or tongue biting. You will be given information relating to any local analgesia and the treatment the child has received. The dentist will explain which pain relief medicines the child may have while recovering and the local analgesia wears off.

You will be given a telephone number of who to contact in case of any concerns.







## Other sources of information:



Fylde Coast Team - 01253 953034  
North Lancashire Team - 01524 406723



Hospital switchboard  
Telephone: 01253 300000

## Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives.



You can contact them via tel: 01253 955589  
or by email: [bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net](mailto:bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net)



Further information is available on our website:  
[www.bfwh.nhs.uk](http://www.bfwh.nhs.uk)

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this booklet then please call: 01253 955520



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