

Inhalation Sedation

Information for Parents, Carers and Families

NHS Lothian Public Dental Service

Introduction

Many children are anxious about having dental treatment. Our aim is to make your child's treatment as comfortable as possible. Inhalation sedation is one way to relieve anxiety and help your child cope with dental care.

What is inhalation sedation?

Inhalation sedation is a method to help patients who are anxious about dental treatment to relax.

Anxiety is reduced by breathing a mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen through a nosepiece; the same mixture of gas and air is often used during labour or in the emergency department of a hospital.

Your child will **not** be asleep and will remain conscious throughout, but will get a feeling of warmth throughout their body as well as some mild tingling and reduced anxiety.

Once they are comfortable and relaxed, dental treatment will be carried out. Inhalation sedation does not numb the teeth and an injection may still be needed. The gas and air will make this easier and local anaesthetic paste can be used to numb the site of the treatment.

What happens after treatment?

Once the sedation is stopped, the dentist / dental therapist will give your child some extra oxygen to help them feel more alert. Recovery is rapid and after a couple of minutes they will feel normal again.

Treatment may not be carried out at the first visit; this will allow your child to become familiar with the effects of the sedation

Are there any risks with inhalation sedation?

Nitrous oxide is a very safe gas when used for dental procedures. Rare side-effects are headaches and feeling sick.

Patient instructions before inhalation sedation

- Your child should eat normally on the day of your appointment, avoiding large meals
- Avoid alcohol on the day of the appointment
- Your child should take their usual medication as normal
- If your child is unwell or has a blocked nose please phone to rearrange your appointment
- If you think you or your child might be pregnant please inform the dentist/dental therapist
- Your child should always be accompanied by a responsible adult. If this is not a person with parental rights for the child we must be able to contact you.

Patient instructions after sedation

- If your child has had local anaesthetic, they may have a numb mouth or lip so remind them not to bite these areas
- Your child can return to school afterwards but should not be too active. You should also follow the specific instructions given to them on the day of treatment.
- They should not ride a bicycle or operate machinery for up to 2 hours following your treatment

After Care

- If your child is having any problems with the **dental** treatment they have had under sedation, you should call the treatment centre where the dental treatment

was carried out. If this happens after the treatment centre is closed, you will hear a telephone answering machine message telling you who to call instead.

- NHS Lothian also provides a daytime dental advice service at Chalmers Dental Centre, which is available Monday to Friday, from 9am to 6pm. To contact this service, dial 0131 536 4800. NHS24 provides a similar dental advice service at all other times. To contact this service dial 111.

Please feel free to ask staff any questions that you might have about your treatment.

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