



D R . L A U R A F O X
FAMILY DENTISTRY

Nitrous Oxide Sedation

What is nitrous oxide?

Commonly known as "laughing gas", nitrous oxide is a non-allergenic, non-irritating gas that affects the central nervous system. It is one of the safest forms of sedation available and is easily and completely reversed by breathing normally for 5 to 10 minutes following treatment.

What are the benefits of nitrous oxide?

1. Nitrous oxide can help you feel more relaxed and reduce the anxiety associated with dental procedures.
2. Nitrous oxide can reduce the discomfort and/or anxiety associated with the injection of local anesthesia. In some cases (particularly with small children) it can take the place of an injection altogether.
3. Unlike other types of sedation, you remain conscious and fully aware during treatment. You are "in control".
4. The effects of nitrous oxide wear off within 5 to 10 minutes breathing normally. Adult patients are able to drive home following treatment and you do not feel sedated for the rest of the day.
5. It can help suppress saliva flow and gag reflexes.

How does nitrous oxide work?

The gas is delivered by a soft rubber hood placed over your nose. This hood is attached to equipment that the dentist uses to regulate the amount of nitrogen and oxygen you receive. You simply breathe in and out through your nose. When your treatment is nearly complete, you will breathe 100% oxygen so that by the time you are dismissed you will feel completely normal again.

What does it feel like?

The most common sensations that patients experience are:

- tingling of hands and feet
- a general feeling of warmth
- numbness of your legs, tongue and oral tissues
- a ringing sensation or droning sound
- feelings of euphoria
- feelings of heaviness or lightness

If you feel nauseous while breathing nitrous oxide, please inform the dentist immediately so that the level can be adjusted.

Not everyone enjoys the feeling of nitrous oxide. If you feel uncomfortable at any time while breathing nitrous oxide, you can discontinue it at once by breathing deeply through your mouth. Be sure to let the dentist know so that the gas can be turned off.

Before taking nitrous oxide:

1. **Do not eat or drink anything for 2 hours prior to your appointment.** Otherwise you may feel nauseous or vomit during treatment.
2. Inform us of any changes to your medical history or any medications you are presently taking.
3. Use the restroom before your dental procedure.

If you have any questions please contact our office at 445-9966.