

NITROUS OXIDE

Nitrous oxide (N₂O) gas, when mixed with oxygen, is a common and safe analgesic agent which is routinely used in dental clinical settings. The administration of this gas, also referred to as “conscious sedation” is a proven and effective method to reduce anxiety and manage pain during dental procedures, and is particularly useful in managing the anxiety of younger patients in the pediatric dental field. This can also be appropriate for the apprehensive adult patient.

The gas is administered with a nasal cone and inhaled during the procedure. The effects of the gas are felt within moments, and a feeling of relaxation generally occurs. Then the procedure is completed, the nitrous gas is turned off, and pure oxygen is administered for several minutes. The patient returns to normal with usually no side effects.

You may feel tingling in fingers and toes while the gas is being administered. Tell your dentist if you feel nauseous or feel like you are spinning during the administration of the nitrous oxide, as this is a sign of a dosage too high.