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# Aloha

## PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

### NITROUS OXIDE SEDATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### What is Nitrous Oxide sedation (N2O)?

Nitrous oxide is a safe and effective technique used to reduce anxiety, produce analgesia, and enhance communication with our patients. Nitrous Oxide is given in conjunction with oxygen during the procedure. When inhaled it is absorbed by the body producing a calming effect. It takes effect very quickly and likewise loses effect quickly once it's discontinued. Breathing of normal room air will eliminate N2O from the body typically within a matter of minutes. Your child remains fully conscious and keeps all natural reflexes when breathing N2O. If the sights, sounds or sensations of dental treatment worry your child or if it's their first filling experience, he or she may respond more positively with the use of nitrous oxide which we may refer to as "happy air."

#### Can my child go back to school? How long will the effects last?

Yes. N2O will be completely out of your child's system within a few moments of breathing oxygen. We'll administer oxygen prior to the end of the procedure to ensure that the nitrous oxide is out of their system before your child leaves the office. There are no residual effects.

#### Is it safe?

N2O is a very light sedative and therefore not strong enough to make your child sleep. Your child will be able to communicate throughout the appointment. He/she will be breathing more oxygen during the N2O administration than is present in room air.

#### Any negative side effects?

There are a few children who might not like the feeling of N2O or feel claustrophobic with the nasal hood placed on their nose. Rarely, it may make their tummy feel upset. We are in constant communication with your child while administering N2O and request they let us know if they are not feeling well. These situations are uncommon. The vast majority of children who breathe in N2O respond favorably to it. It makes their experience more comfortable and tolerable and can be a true benefit in ensuring the visit is successful. In this regard it works well in helping to avoid anxiety for any future appointments.

#### Can we try first without it and see how my child does?

This is an option but one that we normally don't recommend. When a child's anxiety begins to escalate, the N2O won't work as well. It is better to start with it, evaluate their behavior and cooperation, and lower the level or simply turn it off as needed. (A nice thing about using N2O is that levels can be immediately adjusted throughout the procedure according to patient needs as determined by the doctor.)

#### If my child has allergies, will the N2O be harmful?

It is safe to use N2O in children with allergies. There are very few medical conditions that contraindicate its use.

#### Can my child eat before using N2O?

Yes, if possible please have them eat a light meal about an hour before the procedure.

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