

Community Dental Service

Inhalation sedation for adults



What is inhalation sedation

Inhalation sedation is a light form of sedation.

It is a mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen which is breathed through a nosepiece. This helps anxious patients feel relaxed and more able to accept treatment.

Inhalation sedation is NOT general anaesthesia.

A local anaesthetic is still normally required to carry out dental treatment.

What you may feel

During inhalation sedation you may feel:

- Relaxed
- Floaty
- Slightly drowsy but not asleep
- Slightly warm
- Possible tingling in the feet or hands.

You will be awake and conscious throughout the procedure and will be able to talk.

Inhalation sedation takes a few minutes to become effective and also a few minutes to recover from at the end of the procedure.

On the day of your appointment

Please contact the dental department's reception if you develop a cold and cannot breathe easily through your nose.

Inhalation sedation does not work if you have a blocked nose.

- Eat normally on the day of the appointment
- Avoid alcoholic drinks
- Take medication as normal
- Wear loose clothing and sensible footwear.

Please do not bring any young children with you.

It may be advisable to have an adult escort with you for your first treatment appointment.

Unaccompanied adult patients who have received inhalation sedation must adopt caution before operating machinery or signing legal documents.

Patients or escorts who are trying to conceive or who are pregnant must inform the dentist in advance of their appointment.

You may be asked to remain in the clinic for up to 30 minutes after treatment is complete.

After the treatment

After receiving inhalation sedation, you should avoid active sports such as swimming, cycling, running or gym sessions for the rest of the day and driving if possible.

If you have any concerns or queries about inhalation sedation, please contact the dental reception Monday to Friday, between 9am and 5pm, on telephone number

For impartial and confidential advice or information on the services provided by Bridgewater or to receive this leaflet in an alternative format call our Patient Services team on 0800 587 0562.