

Inhalation Sedation

...information for parents

What is inhalation sedation?

- > Inhalation sedation is used to help children have dental treatment. It is used along with other techniques to help your child relax.
- > It is sometimes called 'happy gas' or 'happy air'.
- > Inhalation sedation is conscious sedation brought on by breathing in a combination of two gases, nitrous oxide and oxygen.
- > The gases are breathed in and out through a mask resting over your child's nose.
- > The gases produce a calming and relaxing effect. Most children become less aware of their surroundings, but they will not go to sleep.
- > The dentist will control how much gas your child has.

Who can benefit from inhalation sedation?

Children who require dental treatment may benefit from inhalation sedation if they:

- > are moderately anxious or fearful
- > are physically or medically compromised
- > have a gag reflex that interferes with dental care.

Your child must be willing to co-operate for inhalation sedation to be useful.

Inhalation sedation *cannot* be used if your child:

- > cannot breathe through their nose
- > has blocked or infected sinuses or ears
- > has behavioural difficulties or drug dependence
- > has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

If your child has sore ears two to three days before the appointment, please contact the clinic.

What will happen at my child's appointment?

At your child's appointment the dentist will explain the treatment.

A local anaesthetic may be required for dental treatment carried out under inhalation sedation.

Are there any after-effects?

Once the gas is turned off, its effects wear off very quickly. Normally there are no lasting effects from the use of gas. Children may feel nauseated and may vomit - however this is very rare.

What can I do to help?

- > Speak positively about your child's dental care.
- > Have confidence in your child's ability to cope.
- > On the day of the appointment, give your child small meals only.

How much does it cost?

There is no fee for inhalation sedation at South Australian Dental Service clinics for children who are enrolled in the School Dental Service.

There may be a waiting time for inhalation sedation. You will be contacted by the clinic to arrange an appointment.

For more information

SA Dental Service
GPO Box 864
Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone: 8222 9016
Fax: 8222 9020
TTY: 8222 8390
www.sadental.sa.gov.au