
What is Entonox?

Entonox is a gas that you may be offered to help you manage your discomfort/pain during some bowel investigations. It consists of 50% oxygen and 50% nitrous oxide. Nitrous oxide is sometimes used for anaesthetics but in this combination it works as a short acting painkiller. Entonox® is sometimes called 'gas and air' and is most commonly used during child birth. As Entonox® is short acting it can be used as a painkiller for any treatment that requires short-term pain relief.

Are there any side effects?

Entonox® can make you feel drowsy and a little light-headed. Other possible side effects include dizziness, nausea and a dry mouth. All these sensations disappear rapidly after you stop using Entonox®. Most patients find that if they persevere and concentrate on breathing slowly then they quickly get used to these sensations.

These side effects will have passed before you are allowed to leave the department.

Can all patients have Entonox®?

As part of your admission the Nurse looking after you will complete a checklist to make sure it is appropriate for you to have Entonox®.

Please tell the nurse if you have or recently had;

- Eye surgery (with gas bubble insertion).
- Head injury with impaired consciousness.
- Facial injuries.
- Heavy sedation.
- Previous laryngectomy.
- Pneumothorax (collapsed lung), lung surgery, chest drain.
- Severe chronic pulmonary disease (breathing problems).
- Extensive swelling of the abdomen or bowel obstruction.
- Decompressions sickness (recent dive).
- Air embolism.

Procedures where Entonox® may be used

Entonox® can be used during the following procedures:

- Flexible sigmoidoscopy
- Colonoscopy
- Entonox® can be given as the sole painkiller during these procedures or as an addition to sedation and/or other analgesia used.

How do I use it?

You will be shown the Entonox® equipment and the Nurse will explain how to use it.

You should start using Entonox® one to two minutes before the treatment starts to allow time for it to work. To get the best effect you need to take slow breaths slightly deeper than normal.

What are the Benefits/Risks involved in the use of Entonox®?

Benefits

- You will be in control.
- The pain relief effects are rapid.
- There are no long lasting side effects.
- The effects of Entonox® wear off quickly.

Risks

There is minimal risk involved with the administration of Entonox®. The main concern is that the gas might get trapped in the body, this is only a problem if you have specific medical conditions. The Nurse will carefully assess you before you have the Entonox® and will not give it if there is any risk that this may happen.

Is there an alternative?

If you are not able to have Entonox® then an alternative painkiller will be discussed with you by the Nurses and Doctors.

What you can and cannot do afterwards

After using Entonox® the effects should wear off quickly. However, we advise that you should be cautious about getting up and walking around until your balance has fully returned.

There are no formal restrictions on you and providing you are fit for discharge, you will be able to go about your normal daily activities within 30 minutes.

You must wait a minimum of 30 minutes before attempting to drive but this will be longer if you have been given other medicines that might cause sedation or drowsiness.

Contacts

For appointments: please contact the Endoscopy Unit booking office on **01493 452690**

For advice: please contact the Endoscopy Unit on **01493 452370**

Monday to Friday 08.00 – 18.00

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Entonox® either before or after your procedure then please discuss these with the nursing staff on the day of your appointment.

This booklet was produced by: The Endoscopy Team and the Endoscopy Patient Participation Group at the James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

