What is Entonox?

Entonox is a gas made up of 50% nitrous oxide and 50% oxygen. It has been used for pain management for many years in the maternity hospitals and ambulance service. You may be more familiar with hearing it called ‘gas and air’. The gas is colourless and odourless. It is used to control the pain during short treatments such as dressing changes, physiotherapy, removal of drains and injections.

How do I use Entonox?

Entonox is self-administered. This means that you administer it yourself. A Health Professional who has undergone training will remain with you throughout the time that you use it.

You will be asked to breathe normally using the mouthpiece or mask and you will be asked to use it for approximately five minutes prior to your treatment starting.

As you continue to use the Entonox you may start to feel a little light-headed. You may also start to feel a little relaxed or drowsy and the nurse will check if you are ready to start your treatment. You will need to keep breathing the gas until your procedure or treatment is complete.

Entonox is very safe when you self administer, because if you become drowsy you will automatically move the mouthpiece away from your mouth and therefore stop administering the Entonox.

Entonox only works when you breathe it in, so its effects wear off very quickly. Gas mixtures will help to relieve pain but will not necessarily remove it completely. The Nurse will stay with you and if you need any more painkillers, just ask.

When the treatment is completed, just stop using Entonox and within a few seconds you will feel perfectly normal again.

What are the benefits of Entonox?

- You will be in control
- The pain relieving effects are rapid
- There are no long-lasting side effect

Does Entonox have any side effects?

Some people feel light-headed during use. Occasionally nausea can be experienced, as can tiredness. Some people complain of a dry mouth, so you may wish to have a glass of water to sip. You may experience a tingling in your fingers.

Is Entonox my only choice?

No, if you prefer not to use Entonox there are other painkillers available. Please ask your Nurse.
Can I drive after using Entonox?

The makers of Entonox recommend that at least 30 minutes has elapsed after usage. However this will depend on which procedure you have had done, and must be discussed with the people looking after you.

Only you can assess your ability to drive safely. Do not drive unless you feel you are safe to do so.

What happens when I have finished using Entonox?

You will be asked to remain on your bed or chair for 30 minutes afterwards.

Your Nurse will ensure that you are comfortable. You may require other painkillers after the use of Entonox because the effects are very short lived.

If you have any further questions, please let your Nurse know. If he/she cannot answer your questions they will be able to contact the pain management team, who will be able to give advice.

You can get copies of this and other leaflets from our website.

www.chesterfieldroyal.nhs.uk

Do you have special communication needs?

Speak to a member of staff if you need interpreting services (including sign language) at your appointments, or if you would prefer information in another format.