NITROUS OXIDE PROTOCOL

Nitrous oxide (N₂O), also known as “laughing gas”, is used to help some children who are unable to accept dental treatment due to their young age, fear or large amount of treatment that is required. N₂O is not a general anaesthetic and your child will not be asleep as for an operation in the hospital. While there are risks associated with any type of sedation, with N₂O it is most commonly nausea and vomiting. Very few other significant side effects have been reported when it is used on healthy children.

We have decided to treat your child utilizing Nitrous Oxide here in the dental office. The following are some important steps to follow for the successful completion of this treatment.

- Please inform the office if within 7 days prior to the appointment your child becomes ill or develops a fever. This may necessitate rescheduling of the appointments for your child’s health and safety.

- It is essential that your child have only light food (i.e.: toast with jam, clear soup, cracker) from 6 hours up to 3 hours prior to the appointment time. Up to two hours prior to the appointment, your child may have clear fluids. During the 2 hours prior to the appointment, do not give your child anything to eat or drink. Violating these recommendations can be dangerous for your child and thus your appointment will have to be rescheduled.

- Please ensure that your child is not wearing any nail polish as this interferes with the equipment that we use to monitor your child’s heart rate.

- Follow post-operative instructions closely. Please call the office if any problems or questions arise.

- It is impossible to predict whether the sedation with N₂O will be sufficient to allow the dental treatment to be carried out on your child. In some cases it may be necessary to lessen the amount of treatment or reschedule the appointment depending on the situation. If the N₂O does not provide adequate sedation then the alternatives are as follow:
  - Delay Treatment until your child is able to cooperate
  - Try another stronger sedative in combination with the N₂O on a subsequent visit
  - Have your child seen in the hospital under general anaesthetic

All off these alternatives have some advantages and disadvantages, which we will be glad to discuss with you if they become necessary.

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