

Entonox (Gas and Air)

Pain relief during your endoscopy procedure

What is Entonox?

Entonox is a colourless, odourless gas made up of an equal mixture of nitrous oxide (50%) and oxygen (50%). It is widely used in healthcare settings to provide effective short-term pain relief and relaxation. You may also know it as 'gas and air'.

During your endoscopy procedure, Entonox can help to reduce discomfort and anxiety, making your experience as comfortable as possible.

How does it work?

Entonox works quickly — usually within 30 to 60 seconds of breathing it in. It helps to reduce the sensation of pain and can make you feel light-headed or slightly dreamy. The effects wear off very quickly once you stop inhaling, and it leaves your body within a few minutes.

How will I use Entonox?

Entonox is delivered through a handheld mouthpiece or mask. You are always in control:

- Hold the mouthpiece yourself and breathe in slowly and deeply when you feel discomfort.
- Breathe in through your mouth and out through your nose or mouth — whichever feels natural.
- Start breathing the gas a few seconds before the discomfort begins if you can.
- If you feel dizzy or light-headed, simply stop inhaling and breathe normally — the effects will pass quickly.
- Your nurse will guide you throughout the procedure.

Benefits of Entonox

- ✓ Acts quickly — effective within 30–60 seconds
- ✓ You stay awake and in control throughout
- ✓ No injection needed
- ✓ Wears off rapidly — you may be able to drive after a short rest period (check with your nurse)
- ✓ Safe for most patients
- ✓ Can be combined with other forms of pain relief

Possible side effects

Entonox is very safe, but like any medication it can cause some side effects. These are usually mild and pass quickly when you stop inhaling:

- Light-headedness or dizziness
- Nausea or sickness (uncommonly)
- Tingling in your hands or feet
- Feeling of floating or detachment

- Short-term memory of the procedure may be reduced

If you feel unwell at any point, let go of the mouthpiece and tell your nurse immediately.

Who should not use Entonox?

Entonox is not suitable for everyone. Please tell your nurse or doctor **BEFORE** your procedure if any of the following apply to you:

- You have been told you have air trapped in your body, such as a pneumothorax (collapsed lung) or bowel obstruction
- You have had recent eye surgery involving a gas bubble
- You have a known deficiency of Vitamin B12 or folate
- You have been scuba diving within the last 24 hours
- You are in the first trimester (first 12 weeks) of pregnancy
- You have severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or breathing difficulties requiring high-flow oxygen
- You are currently taking methotrexate

If you are unsure about any of the above, please speak to a member of the endoscopy team before your appointment.

Before your procedure

There is no special preparation needed specifically for Entonox. However, please ensure you have followed all of the preparation instructions for your endoscopy procedure as instructed in your appointment letter.

On the day of your procedure, please inform the nursing staff of:

- All medications you are currently taking
- Any allergies you have
- Any previous reactions to anaesthetic or sedation
- Any concerns or questions you may have about the procedure

After your procedure

Because Entonox leaves your body very quickly, most people recover within minutes of stopping use. Unlike sedation, you are likely to feel alert and well quite soon after your procedure.

Driving after Entonox

If Entonox is the **ONLY** pain relief used during your procedure, you may be able to drive after a short rest period in the unit.

However, if you have also received intravenous sedation, you must **NOT** drive for 24 hours and must arrange for a responsible adult to accompany you home.

Please confirm this with your nurse before leaving.

Your choices

Using Entonox is entirely your choice. You may also be offered:

- No analgesia (some patients prefer to have their procedure without any pain relief)
- Intravenous sedation — a sedative given by injection into a vein, which makes you drowsy but is not a general anaesthetic
- A combination of Entonox and sedation

Please discuss your preferences and any concerns with your endoscopist or nurse prior to your procedure. They will help you to choose the option that is best for you.

Consent

Your nurse will ask for your verbal consent before administering Entonox. You are free to withdraw consent at any time during the procedure — simply put down the mouthpiece and let a member of staff know.

Questions or concerns?

If you have any questions before your appointment, please contact the Endoscopy Unit:

Telephone: 066 7149800

Hours: 09.00am to 16.00pm

Address: Bon Secours Hospital Strand street, Tralee, Co Kerry

You can also ask to speak to a nurse specialist or your endoscopist.