

Entonox for Pain Relief

Perinatal Services - Maternity

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

Introduction

This leaflet explains what Entonox is, how to use it safely and what you can expect if you choose to use it to ease pain.

What is Entonox?

Entonox is a gas with no colour or smell, made up of half nitrous oxide and half oxygen. It is also called gas and air or laughing gas.

In labour, for emergencies and short medical procedures (like having stiches), Entonox is breathed in through a mask or mouthpiece as a safe and useful way to quickly control pain.

How does Entonox work?

We do not fully know how Entonox works, but it is thought that after breathing it in, it travels to the brain and the spinal cord to help stop pain being felt.

The nitrous oxide helps to make you feel a little sleepy and so more relaxed. The oxygen helps to keep levels topped up in your blood.

Entonox will not take away all of your pain, but it can help to lower it and make it more bearable.

What are the benefits of using Entonox?

- Safe to use in pregnancy, birth and if breastfeeding
- Fast acting; takes only 15 to 20 seconds to work
- Wears off in minutes with no lasting side effects; leaves your body as you breathe out
- You control your pain relief; you can use it at any time during your labour and stop when you want to
- Does not slow your contractions.

What are the risks to using Entonox?

There are very few risks with using Entonox over 24 hours.

If Entonox is used for longer than six to eight hours, it may affect the levels of iron and vitamin B12 in your blood (anaemia).

Entonox should not be used if you already have a condition where gas is trapped in your body (such as a collapsed lung or a bowel blockage).

Talk to your Midwife or Doctor if you have any worries about using Entonox, they will not give it if they do not think it is right for you.

Are there side effects to using Entonox?

Using Entonox has no harmful side effects for you or the baby.

Entonox can make you feel dizzy, sick, light-headed, tingly, sleepy, unable to concentrate or giggly. It can also give you a dry mouth or headache. These usually wear off once you stop using Entonox.

How do I use Entonox

You can use it throughout labour and if you need any procedures after giving birth.

The gas is breathed in through a mouthpiece which you hold yourself. Entonox only flows when you breathe in so you control how much you use, taking it in when you need it. Your Midwife will show you what to do.

- Hold the mouthpiece firmly between your lips to form a seal and breathe in slowly and deeply to feel the effects.
- Your Midwife will tell you how to breathe out in a way that sends gas away from staff who work with Entonox all shift.

Entonox works best when you get the timing right.

- You should start breathing Entonox as soon as you feel a contraction coming on so you get the full effect when the pain is at its worst.
- You should not use it between contractions or for long periods.

What other methods of pain relief are available?

Your Midwife will talk you through all the pain relief options that are safe for you and your baby.

Can I use Entonox with another method of pain relief?

Yes you can. Your midwife will talk to you about this.

Where can I use Entonox?

Entonox is prescribed by a healthcare professional under controlled conditions.

It is available to use in:

- Maternity Triage unit (MTU)
- Maternity Induction Unit (MIU)
- Delivery Suite (DS)
- Midwifery Led Unit
- Your home; your midwife will bring Entonox if you are having a home birth.

Where can I find out more?

Talk to your midwife if you have any questions about Entonox.

Maternity Triage Unit New Cross Hospital 01902 695037

NHS England

Pain relief in labour - NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/labour-and-birth/what-happens/pain-relief-in-labour/>

Pain relief and medication during labour - Start for Life - NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/pregnancy/preparing-for-labour-and-birth/pain-relief-and-medication-during-labour/>

National Childbirth Trust 0300 330 0700

Pain relief in labour | NCT

<https://www.nct.org.uk/information/labour-birth/pain-labour/pain-relief-labour>

To read more on how Entonox effects our Environment.

What are the environmental impacts of medical nitrous oxide? |
BOC Knowledge Base - UK

<https://help.boconline.co.uk/kb/guide/en/what-are-the-environmental-impacts-of-medical-nitrous-oxide-8AinwajDKk/Steps/2073715>

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。