

Community Endoscopy Service

Risks associated with using Entonox

What is Entonox?

Entonox is the trade name of a medical gas comprising of 50% oxygen and 50% Nitrous Oxide. It is commonly used as a fast-acting analgesia and can be found in areas of care such as ambulances and maternity units. It is utilised by breathing in the gas through a designated mouth-piece.

The purpose and intended benefit/s of using Entonox is/are:

- To aid diagnosis during a colonoscopy/flexible sigmoidoscopy by allowing the patient to undertake the procedure with minimal discomfort.
- The patient has complete control over their own analgesia.
- Entonox leaves your body very quickly after the cessation of its use – this means that patients can resume their normal activities after their procedure as opposed to the use of sedation where patients must adhere to a list of activities that they cannot undertake for 12 hours post-procedure.

Possible side effects of using Entonox:

- Common side effects can be Entonox can be drowsiness and feelings of being light-headed.
- Other possible side effects can include dizziness, nausea and a dry mouth.
- A tingling sensation, usually in the fingers can occur, this is often due to breathing too quickly.

Complications of using Entonox:

Entonox is safe to use for a great number of people – however there are certain conditions which mean that it must not be used on certain patients. Your admission nurse will use a screening questionnaire which will let us know if this gas is suitable for you. Complications from its use can occur when these conditions are not disclosed and Entonox is used incorrectly.

Alternative medication:

- If you do not wish to use Entonox, please make this known to your nursing staff so an alternative can be discussed.