Using Entonox™ for pain relief
Haematology/Oncology Day Care
This leaflet explains what Entonox™ is and how it’s used for pain relief. If you have any questions after reading this leaflet, please speak to the team looking after you.

**What is Entonox™?**

Entonox™, most commonly known as ‘gas and air’, is a mixture of half nitrous oxide and half oxygen.

It is an odourless, colourless gas which can provide excellent, short-term pain relief during a range of medical procedures. It starts to work quickly (within several minutes) and wears off almost as quickly.

**What are the benefits of using Entonox™?**

- Predictable, reliable and effective pain relief
- Sedative (calming) effect without loss of consciousness
- Starts to work quickly and wears off quickly
- Easy for the patients to use themselves
- Few side effects.
What are the risks?
There are very few risks involved in using Entonox™. The main concerns include:

• Entonox™ reacting with the gas bubbles present in the body after certain procedures, such as eye surgery, causing them to expand and burst

• Entonox™ becoming trapped in the body if you have a specific medical condition, such as pneumothorax, abdominal distension or suspected intestinal obstruction

• Entonox™ causing a rise in the pressure around the brain in people with head injury.

The nursing team looking after you will carefully assess you before they give you Entonox™. If you are at risk of any of the problems listed above, you will not be given Entonox™.

Are there any alternatives?
Currently there are no alternatives to Entonox™. If it’s not suitable for you, your doctor will talk to you about any available options.
How is Entonox™ given?
You can administer Entonox™ yourself and a specially trained nurse or doctor will show you what to do.

We will give you a mouthpiece, which you will need to place in your mouth. It’s important that you hold the mouthpiece firmly between your teeth/lips.

You will need to breathe deeply for one to two minutes before the procedure begins to ensure that the painkiller is in your body. Entonox™ will only flow when you breathe in, so the deeper you breathe, the better your pain relief will be.

What are the possible side effects?
Common side effects of using Entonox™ are:
• dizziness
• light-headedness
• sickness
• tingling
• disorientation.

These effects should ease when you stop breathing in the gas. Please speak to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.
Can I drive after using Entonox™?
If you have been given Entonox™ on its own, you must wait at least 30 minutes after use before driving or using any machines.

If you have been given any additional pain relief after your procedure, your doctor or nurse will advise you.

Contact details
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Haematology/Oncology Day Care
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Macmillan Cancer Centre
Huntley Street
London WC1E 6AG

Direct telephone: 020 3447 9702
(8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday)

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