

Relative analgesia (RA) for dental treatment: Information for patients

This information sheet aims to help you understand the treatment you are going to have and contains answers to many commonly asked questions. If you have any other questions or would like further explanation, please ask.

What is relative analgesia (RA)?

Relative Analgesia is a form of sedation. It is a mixture of oxygen and nitrous oxide which is breathed in through a nosepiece. It is not a general anaesthetic. You remain relaxed but conscious throughout the procedure. If you are nervous about having dental treatment, relative analgesia is an effective and safe way to enhance your treatment experience..

Why do I need RA?

It is an ideal way of helping you to relax if you are nervous about dental treatment.

What are the benefits?

The gas mixture starts working within a minute or two of you breathing it. It wears off equally quickly so the more of you breath in, the greater the effect. This way you tend to find the most comfortable, relaxed state for yourself. Whilst under treatment, you will feel relaxed but you will still be able to understand and respond to requests from the dentist.

Are there any risks?

Relative analgesia is extremely safe when it is supervised by a specially trained dentist and has the main effect of reducing your anxiety and make you feel relaxed.

Are there any alternatives?

- Local anaesthetic alone
- Intravenous sedation
- General anaesthetic

These alternatives may not be suitable for you. Intravenous sedation will have already been discussed with you. A separate information sheet is available for this.

General anaesthesia is not available in the dental practice setting. Your dentist will let you know what will be best for you.

Consent

We must by law obtain your written consent. We will explain risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign a consent form. If you are unsure about any aspect of the treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to speak with a member of staff again.

You must confirm your consent for the procedure before treatment starts.

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Do I need to prepare for relative analgesia?

- Take your routine medicines at the usual times.
- Have only light meals and non-alcoholic drinks on the day of your appointment.
- Bring a responsible adult with you if possible however strictly speaking an escort is not required.

Where will it be carried out?

The treatment will be carried out in our dental clinic.

What happens during relative analgesia?

A small mask will be placed over your nose and the concentration of gas mixture is gradually turned up. You will be asked to breath through your nose. The more you can do this, the better the effect. Please let us know if you think this will be a problem as it may mean relative analgesia is the most appropriate way to look after you.

Your blood pressure will be checked before and after the procedure.

As well as the relative analgesia, you will be given a local anaesthetic. You will have this after you start feeling the effects of the gas mixture.

The length of time you will be sedated varies depending on the treatment you are having.

What happens after relative analgesia?

You will need to stay with us until you are considered ready to leave the practice.

Recovery usually takes just a few minutes but but can be longer. You will be able to leave soon afterwards, when you are feeling normal again.

Who can I contact with queries and concerns?

Please contact us at the the practice during the working week or out of hours on: 07778 685956