

Dental Treatment For Children: A Guide For Parents

Asthma, Colds, and Nitrous Oxide (Laughing) Gas

****If your child is having Nitrous Oxide Gas for Dental Treatment, it is critical that he/she can breathe nasally.****

A child that uses inhalers/puffers for Asthma prevention and/or treatment should use them as follows:

- Use any daily prevention/steroid inhalers as indicated on the prescription
- Use the rescue/Ventolin inhaler 1 hour before the Dental Treatment appointment

A child that develops a cold or sinusitis within 1-3 days of a Dental Treatment appointment with Nitrous Oxide (Laughing) Gas will usually need to be rescheduled. Please call the Clinic if this happens.

When to book the appointment

We prefer to book treatment appointments between 9am and 12-noon for children because they are rested and are able to have a better dental experience.

At the appointment

In our experience children usually respond more positively, and are more cooperative and calm when the parent/caregiver is not present in the Treatment Room. Children are able to focus and listen more readily to the dentist and assistant giving instructions. Having a parent giving instruction can cause confusion for the child because the authority figure is unclear.

If you choose to accompany your child in the treatment room please keep in mind the following guidelines to improve chances of a positive experience and outcome:

- Allow us to prepare your child
- On the day of treatment, we will describe the things to expect during the appointment.
- If the child has questions before the day of treatment, please be supportive of our approach by using the list of terms below.
- These terms are not meant to “trick” or “fib” to your child. They are time-tested by pediatric dental specialists to prevent fear and improve cooperation.
- Please be a silent observer by supporting your child with touches to allow us to maintain his/her focus when we communicate with your child.
- Children will tend to listen to their parents instead of the dentist and assistant. A silent parent will encourage the child to listen to our guidance.
- Be prepared to leave the room when asked for better communication and cooperation from your child.
- Children may try to control the situation by “acting out” to gain support from the parent. Because this is unproductive we will ask the parent to leave the treatment room to “short circuit” the control attempt.
- In your absence we will continue to support your child at all times.
- These are very important ways that you can actively help in the success of your child’s visit. We are confident that all will go well and hope these guidelines will help prepare you with confidence for the upcoming appointment.

Terminology

We are selective in our use of words to improve the chances of your child having a positive experience. We try to avoid words that may frighten the child. Please support us by substituting negative words with the following:

Negative Words

Nitrous Oxide Gas
Needle or Shot
Drill
Drill Tooth
Pull Tooth
Decay or Cavity
Examination
Tooth Cleaning
Explorer/Dental Tools
Rubber Dam

Equivalent

Magic Air/Astronauts Mask/Elephant Nose/Happy Nose
Sleepy juice/Sleepy medicine to put the sugar-bugs to sleep
Mr. Whistle/Tooth shower/Mr. Wiggle/Sugar-bug chaser
Chase sugar-bugs/A sugar-bug hunt/Wash sugar-bugs
Wiggle Tooth/See what sugar-bugs are hiding underneath the tooth
Sugar bugs are hiding in the tooth/building a house in the tooth
Count Teeth
Tickle Teeth
Tooth Counter
Raincoat

This will also help you understand your child’s description of the dental experience. Our intention is not to “fool” the child—it is to create an experience that is positive. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us build a non-fearful and good experience for your child!