



# Helping Hands

Jennifer K. Hargleroad, DDS, MS

2105 Bighorn Road, Unit 202

Fort Collins, CO 80525

(970) 493-2254

## **BASICS OF NITROUS OXIDE**

Inhalation sedation, also known as Nitrous Oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), may be the safest type of sedation method used in dentistry. Nitrous Oxide is a tasteless and colorless gas that is inhaled through a nose piece. We can spray the nose piece to smell like a variety of different fruits. The patients can choose what smell they would like for their appointment. Administration is fairly simple and always done by someone with special training in nitrous oxide. A child must be cooperative enough to tolerate the nose piece for proper inhalation of the gas; otherwise the nitrous oxide will not be effective. Patients often feel much more relaxed minutes after placement of the nose piece. They will feel the sensations of warmth, tingling and floating. Patients are awake, able to communicate and have full control of their actions at all times while being on nitrous oxide. Nausea is one of the few side effects associated with nitrous oxide. It is rarely seen and in most cases can be prevented. If nitrous oxide is planned to be used for the procedure, we recommend only light, non-fatty meals prior to the procedure to aid in the prevention of nausea. Patients who are particularly nervous for dental treatment are good candidates for the use of nitrous oxide. Patients who are not good candidates for the use of N<sub>2</sub>O are patients who may be pregnant, have nasal obstruction, have an ear infection, or those with emotional instability. After the procedure is complete, the patient will breathe pure oxygen for at least 5 minutes. This ensures that there is not any nitrous oxide left in their system. Patients will be fully recovered after breathing the oxygen. Nitrous oxide is a safe and easy way to make your child's dental experience more enjoyable.

\*Please be advised that pregnant mothers will not be allowed in the operatories when nitrous oxide is in use.