Nitrous Oxide Use in Dental Care

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to nitrous oxide?

- Nitrous oxide is on the Proposition 65 list because it can cause birth defects or other reproductive harm.
- Women exposed to nitrous oxide may experience reduced fertility. Exposure during pregnancy may cause loss of pregnancy, and birth defects or other reproductive harm.
- Proposition 65 requires businesses to determine if they must provide a warning about exposure to listed chemicals.

What is nitrous oxide?

Nitrous oxide, commonly known as “laughing gas,” is a gas used in combination with other gases to ease pain and anxiety during certain dental procedures.

How does exposure to nitrous oxide occur during dental care?

- A dental patient breathes in nitrous oxide when it is used during a dental procedure.
- During pregnancy, nitrous oxide can pass from mother to baby when the mother undergoes a dental procedure using this gas.

How can I reduce my exposure to nitrous oxide during dental care?

- Have regular dental checkups and practice good oral hygiene.
- When planning dental work, especially during pregnancy, talk with your doctor or dentist about anesthetic options other than nitrous oxide.

For more information:

Scientific Fact Sheets and Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Controlling Exposures to Nitrous Oxide During Anesthetic Administration
    http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/94-100/
  - Control of Nitrous Oxide in Dental Operatories
    http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/94-129/

Dental Oral Health

- California Dental Association (CDA)
  - Oral Health Fact Sheets
    http://www.cda.org/public-resources/patient-fact-sheets
  - Nitrous Oxide
    http://www.cda.org/Portals/0/pdfs/fact_sheets/nitrous_oxide_english.pdf
Proposition 65

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
  Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
  - Proposition 65: Background
    https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq
  - Proposition 65: The List of Chemicals
    https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals
  - Proposition 65: Fact Sheets
    https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets