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Of course Library New User Existing User Help Using this form of conscious suppression represents an effective alternative pain management strategy for dental procedures. MARKET LEARNING This course was published in the January 2018 edition and ends in January 2021. Writers don't have commercial conflicts of interest to disclose. This activity of self-study of 2 credit hours is communicated electronically. Objectives The role of nitrous oxide (N2O) in dentistry and its effects on patients. List of possible contraindications for the administration of conscious sedation during dental treatment. Discuss important clinical considerations when administering N2O suppression. Nitrous oxide (N2O) is a colourless, non-chromate, low-activity anaesthetic gas administered in combination with oxygen (O2) to provide minimal and moderate levels of conscious sedation in the dental office. Its chemical formula is N2O and has been used in dentistry for more than 150 years. It is odorless, non-axial and harmless when sufficient oxygen is administered at the same time. Therefore, N2O will not irritate the pulmonary epithelium when inhaled, making it a viable option in many dental specialties.1–4The administration of N2O-O2 is indicated mainly for patients with mild to moderate dental anxiety or fear. Minimal sedation is achieved when N2O is used at concentrations of less than 50%, but can help relieve stress associated with attractions, the sounds and smells of the operator, as well as reduce the reflex.5 Administration of N2O-O2 can help patients with controlled conditions exacerbated by stress, such as asthma, angina or seizures.4 Some procedures can be completed using concentrations of less than 50%.6 In cases requiring higher N2O concentrations, dentists may choose to exceed 50% of the minimum level of sedation. Patients with severe dental stress, or requiring more invasive procedures, may need deeper sedation. In these cases, providers may pair N2O with oral or intravenous sedatives. IT is difficult to find consensus on absolute contraindications for N2O use. Each patient should be evaluated separately, weighing the risks and benefits of identifying possible relevant contraindications - which is the individual circumstance that increases a patient's likelihood of an adverse reaction. For example, N2O is contraindicated for treatment or prophylaxis among pregnant patients as it crosses the placental barrier, exposing the fetus. If a pregnant patient needed emergency procedure, however, its use may be justified after medical consultation with its doctor.4,7,8 Other relevant contraindications include chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cystic fibrosis, recent middle ear or eye surgery where a gas bubble was used, bowel obstruction, current or recovery of addiction problems, psychological dysfunction, use of or psychotropic drugs, or serious cardiovascular diseases.3,4,6,9 When used at the same time as at least 30% oxygen, N2O has no additional risks for patients and can be used in most cases where minimal sedation is indicated.4,10There are cases, however, in which N2O delivery simply will not be effective. For example, a patient should be able to breathe through his or her nose. Patients with active upper respiratory infection, rhinitis, or abnormal nasal anatomy that reduces nasal air flow may not be suitable candidates for conscious sedation. Patients who cannot tolerate nasal hood or claustrophobia experience are also not good candidates for N2O-O2 suppression. N2O-O2's distribution is quite simple (Table 1). Always start with a thorough review of the patient's health history and medications to determine the American Society of A person's anesthesiologists (ASA) physical status classification. Get vital signs that include blood pressure, pulse and respiratory rhythm. In addition, the use of pulse oxymetry — which involves monitoring and recording blood oxygen saturation at the beginning, during and after the completion of the procedure — is prudent when providing inhalation suppression. According to the ASA's practice guidelines for sedation and analgesia by non-anesthesiologists, the use of a pulse oximeter is necessary for any patient who will have more than 50% N2O delivered, which is considered more than minimal sedation.11The gas mixture is delivered via a nasal hood that fits over the patient's nose. Various hood sizes are available, and the right choice maximizes the benefits of the gas agent to the patient while minimizing leakage to the operation. Start conscious suppression processes by activating oxygen at about 6 liters per minute. Help the patient, but let him place the nasal hood over the nose, ensuring a comfortable and correct fit. Establish the patient's tidal volume (usually 6 to 8 liters per minute for adults, and 3 to 5 liters per minute for children) to determine the appropriate flow rate. If the patient is not able to breathe comfortably through the nose and feels the need to take a breath orally, providers should increase the liters of oxygen delivered. Clinicians should start inhaling sedation by titration of N2O at a concentration level of 20%.4,6 Remember that sedation is a continuous, therefore, it is not possible to know exactly how a patient will respond to a given concentration. Continue titration using start low, go slow, increasing N2O by about 5% every 1 to 2 minutes, ensuring that the established flow rate is maintained at all times. Once the appropriate level has been reached and the patient begins to show ideal signs and symptoms (Table 2, page 46) of conscious sedation, clinicians should maintain desired concentration.4,12,13 Some experts suggest reducing the concentration by a few percent at this point to avoid delayed increases in intensity when setting the original value. Patients often refer to N2O as laughing gas, however, people who experience uncontrollable laughter are likely to receive very high concentration of N2O gas. FIGURE 1. This imaging of an anesthesia administration and purification system with nitrous oxide indicates possible sources of leakage of gaseous waste that can enter the operator. Operating a delivery system without a cleanup unit to reduce the amount of waste gases in the air fails to meet the minimum standard of care.10 Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Control of nitrous oxide in dental terminations.16Seed the desired level of sedation, the process can begin. Patients should never be left unattended during administration. After completion of treatment, shut down the flow of N2O, maintain the established tidal volume and increase the O2 concentration to 100% for at least 3 to 5 minutes in order to remove the increased N2O present in the alveoid sites in the lungs.4.10 If patients continue to experience signs and symptoms of sedation, additional O2 may be necessary. This helps to avoid diffusion hypoxia, which can cause headache, nausea or grogginess due to a decrease in oxygen reaching the body from the lungs. Administration documentation is required in the patient's health record. The information should include vital signs, O2 saturation, established tidal volume, gas percentage concentration, N2O-O2 delivery duration and O2 duration given after completion of the process. The documentation should also include how the patient responded to N2O. Submit costs using the American Dental Association (ADA), current D9230 terminology code. Mechanism of actionEally, because N2O is the least potent of anesthetic gases, patients will not all respond in a similar way. About 5% of the population is considered sub-negative and will not feel the effects at all.3.4 Another 5% of the population is hyperanesthetic and will feel the effects quickly.3 For inhalation anesthetics, the mechanism of action occurs through diffusion, which depends on a concentration gradient. meaning, the gas will disperse from the areas of the highest concentration to the areas of the lowest concentration. As n2O is inhaled, there is a higher concentration of N2O in the lungs, so that N2O will be diffused Blood. This process happens quite quickly, as N2O has one of the lowest distribution coefficients of any gas mixture. Referred to as relative analgesia, N2O does not prevent or eliminate pain, but instead reduces the body's response to harmful stimuli by increasing the pain threshold. Its role as an anesthetic is limited because when N2O is it is as a single factor for minimal and moderate levels of conscious sedation, it is incapable of causing general anesthesia.7.9 Although great progress has been made in understanding N2O over the last 30 years, analgesics, Its anxiolytic and anaesthetic mechanisms of action are not yet fully understood.13SAFETYReser regulations, equipment safety features, safety mechanisms and monitoring protocols have contributed to the reduction of lethal doses and incidental occupational exposures resulting from N2O.14 In 1976, the ADA Council on Dental Materials, Instruments and Equipment adopted standards for inhalation units in the United States. By 1980, the council recommended that cleaning plants be installed and monitoring protocols implemented.15 Today, the operation of a delivery system without a purification plant to reduce the amount of gas waste in the air does not meet the minimum level of care (Figure 1).10 The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health recommends a 25 ppm exposure limit to the dental business during the NO2O.16 administration for an 8-hour period, time-weighted average, the American Conference of Government Industrial Hygienists recommends a threshold limit value of 50 ppm.17 While dosimeter tokens are available to monitor the exposure of an N2O provider, the accuracy of these emblems is questionable, as traces of N2O found in ambient air can also be recorded. The most important security step in delivery is the titration method. Incremental doses of N2O delivered in a short period of time allow the use of the minimum concentration, while achieving the desired result. This increases patient safety, and also minimizes the exposure of gaseous waste to the clinician.4As with any drug or agent, the likelihood of harm exists and the risk increases with chronic high concentration exposure. Prolonged contact (more than six hours) and/or long-term use of N2O has been shown to inactivate vitamin B12, causing a biochemical imbalance that can lead to bone marrow depression, megaloblastic anemia, malignant anemia and neurological deficits, such as peripheral neuropathies.18–21 Additional studies have shown that exposures, even at high levels, six hours or less have not been shown to cause long-term physiological changes and are generally considered safe.3,4,12,22,23CONCLUSIONAlong with fluoride and local anesthesia, some consider the administration of N2O as one of the greatest achievements in oral health care.24 Dental professionals who wish to add NO2O to their weaponry should receive appropriate and training to deliver this safe and effective agent. 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That Diana Aboytes, RDH, MS, is a trainee clinician of 14 years and educator. He teaches a variety of courses, including periodontology, senior clinic seminar and local anesthesia clinic. Aboytes has authored chapters in the manuals Local Anesthesia for Hygienist Dentistry and Primary Preventive Dentistry. You can take daboytes@salud.unm.edu. Jason R. Flores, DDS, RN, DADBA, DNDDBA, FADSAJason R. Flores, DDS, RN, DADBA, DNDDBA, FADSA, a board-certified dental anesthesiologist and clinical director of dental anesthesiology for the University of New Mexico Medical Group Ambulatory Surgical Center. He is also an associate professor for Advanced Education in General Dentistry, Flores was awarded diplomat status with the American Dental Anesthesiology Council and National Dental Anesthesiology Council, and is a fellow with the American Dental Society of Anesthesiology. Prev PostAn evidence based look at Off-Label Drug UseAThis site uses Akismet to reduce spam. 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