

# NITROUS OXIDE >>



## WHAT IS IT?

- > FROM: CHEMICAL COMPOUND
- > TYPE: DEPRESSANT WITH SEDATIVE & ANAESTHETIC PROPERTIES
- > LOOKS: COLOURLESS GAS
- > SMELL/TASTE: SLIGHTLY SWEET
- > WHAT GETS ME HIGH?: NITROUS OXIDE
- > TAKEN: INHALED - USUALLY FROM BALLOONS
- > KICKS IN: WITHIN SECONDS
- > LASTS: FROM A FEW SECONDS TO AROUND TWO MINUTES

N<sub>2</sub>O  
Whippets  
Chargers  
Nitrous Oxide  
Laughing Gas  
Balloons  
Cracker

## WHAT'S IT USED FOR?

WHEN MIXED 50/50 WITH AIR (GAS & AIR) IT CAN BE USED SAFELY BY DENTISTS & DOCTORS FOR ITS MILD ANAESTHETIC & PAINKILLING EFFECTS IN DENTAL SURGERY OR TO HELP RELIEVE PAIN & ANXIETY FOR WOMEN GIVING BIRTH

IT'S USED IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY & IS OFTEN FOUND IN SILVER, PRESSURISED WHIPPED CREAM CHARGERS. YOU MIGHT NOTICE METAL CANISTERS LYING AROUND IN STREETS OUTSIDE BARS/NIGHTCLUBS OR IN PARKS - WHICH IS A SIGN NITROUS OXIDE HAS BEEN USED

IT HAS RE-EMERGED IN RECENT YEARS AS ONE OF THE MOST COMMONLY USED 'LEGAL HIGHS'

## HOW IT'S USED

NITROUS OXIDE IS INHALED THROUGH THE MOUTH - USUALLY FROM A BALLOON THAT HAS BEEN INFLATED FROM A WHIPPED CREAM CANISTER

**WHIPPETS**>> SILVER METAL CANISTERS THAT CONTAIN NITROUS OXIDE. SOME IMPORTS FROM ABROAD LEAVE AN OILY RESIDUE INSIDE THE DISPENSER SUGGESTING THAT THEY CONTAIN IMPURITIES. DISPOSE OF CONSIDERATELY & NEVER THROW INTO FIRES AS THEY MAY EXPLODE

**CRACKERS**>> GADGET USED TO GET THE GAS FROM THE WHIPPET INTO THE BALLOON. SOME ARE OF POOR QUALITY & DO NOT FULLY PIERCE THE CANISTER, WHICH HAS LED TO SOME USERS DISCARDING THEM THINKING THEY ARE 'DUDS' BEFORE GETTING A FRIGHT & A FREEZE BURN WHEN THEY UNSCREW THE CANISTER & THE GAS SUDDENLY GOES OFF

## HOW YOU'LL FEEL

- >> EUPHORIC, RELAXED & CALM
- >> GIGGLY - HENCE THE NICKNAME 'LAUGHING GAS'
- >> SOUND DISTORTIONS & HALLUCINATIONS - WHEN YOU SEE OR HEAR THINGS THAT AREN'T THERE

NITROUS OXIDE CAN ALSO:

- >> GIVE YOU A SEVERE HEADACHE
- >> CAUSE DIZZINESS
- >> STOP YOU THINKING STRAIGHT
- >> CAUSE SHORT-LIVED BUT INTENSE FEELINGS OF PARANOIA
- >> MAKE YOU FEEL SICK

NITROUS OXIDE SLOWS DOWN YOUR BRAIN & YOUR BODY'S RESPONSES, THE EFFECTS OF THE DRUG VARIES DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH HAS BEEN INHALED



## IS IT ADDICTIVE?

NITROUS OXIDE HAS A RANGE OF EFFECTS ON THE BRAIN WHICH ARE NOT FULLY UNDERSTOOD - THE DISSOCIATIVE EFFECTS ARE PROBABLY CAUSED BY PREVENTING THE NORMAL ACTION OF THE NMDA RECEPTOR

IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO BECOME PSYCHOLOGICALLY DEPENDENT ON NITROUS OXIDE - MEANING THAT USERS DEVELOP AN INCREASED DESIRE TO KEEP USING IT DESPITE THE HARM IT MAY CAUSE - BUT THE EVIDENCE ON THIS IS LIMITED

SOME USERS REPORT DEVELOPING CRAVINGS OR FEELINGS THAT THEY WANT TO CONTINUE USING NITROUS OXIDE - BUT IT IS NOT PHYSICALLY ADDICTIVE

# NITROUS OXIDE » KNOW THE RISKS...

INHALING SOLVENTS CAN CAUSE THE HEART TO BEAT IRREGULARLY WHICH CAN LEAD TO A FATAL HEART ATTACK - THOSE WITH PRE EXISTING HEART CONDITIONS SHOULD AVOID NITROUS OXIDE



## IMPACT ON YOUR BODY

**DIZZINESS »** WHICH MIGHT MAKE YOU ACT CARELESSLY OR INCREASE RISKS OF ACCIDENTS

**VITAMIN B12 DEFICIENCY & ANAEMIA »** HEAVY REGULAR USE CAN LEAD TO THIS. SEVERE B12 DEFICIENCY CAN LEAD TO SERIOUS NERVE DAMAGE WHICH CAUSES TINGLING & NUMBNESS IN THE FINGERS & TOES WHICH CAN BE VERY PAINFUL & MAKE WALKING DIFFICULT

**IMMUNE SYSTEM »** REGULAR USE CAN STOP YOU FORMING WHITE BLOOD CELLS PROPERLY INCREASING YOUR CHANCES OF BECOMING ILL

**SUFFOCATION OR UNCONSCIOUSNESS »** DEATHS FROM NITROUS OXIDE TEND TO OCCUR FROM HEAVY USE RATHER THAN INHALING A SINGLE BALLOON. HOWEVER ANY USE RISKS THE BODY BECOMING STARVED OF OXYGEN WHICH CAN RESULT IN DEATH

## THE LAW

NITROUS OXIDE IS COVERED BY THE 2016 PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES ACT WHICH MEANS IT'S ILLEGAL TO GIVE AWAY OR SELL FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

THERE'S NO PENALTY FOR POSSESSION - UNLESS YOU'RE IN PRISON

**SUPPLY & PRODUCTION** CAN GET YOU UP TO 7 YEARS IN PRISON, AN UNLIMITED FINE OR BOTH

IF THE POLICE CATCH PEOPLE SUPPLYING ILLEGAL DRUGS IN A HOME, CLUB, BAR OR HOSTEL THEY CAN POTENTIALLY PROSECUTE THE LANDLORD, CLUB OWNER OR ANY OTHER PERSON CONCERNED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PREMISES

LIKE DRINK-DRIVING DRIVING WHEN HIGH IS DANGEROUS & ILLEGAL. IF YOU'RE CAUGHT DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE YOU MAY RECEIVE A HEAVY FINE, DRIVING BAN, OR PRISON SENTENCE

**DON'T INHALE DIRECTLY FROM THE CANISTER »** IT'S SO COLD IT COULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE THE THROAT & LUNGS OR STOP YOU BREATHING - THERE'S ALSO A RISK OF BURNS FROM THE PRESSURISED GAS

**DON'T USE MASKS OR A BAG OVER YOUR HEAD »** THIS RISKS DEPRIVING THE BODY OF OXYGEN - THESE METHODS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO SEVERAL DEATHS SO ALWAYS USE IN A WELL VENTILATED AREA

**DON'T OVERDO IT »** TAKE SMALL BREATHS & GIVE YOUR BODY TIME TO RECOVER BEFORE INHALING MORE - BREATHING AIR IN BETWEEN

**THE MORE YOU USE THE GREATER THE RISK »** IT'S HARD TO GAUGE HOW MUCH YOU'RE USING - IF THE BODY IS STARVED OF OXYGEN YOU COULD FAINT OR EVEN SUFFOCATE OR DEVELOP HEART PROBLEMS WHICH CAN BE FATAL

**AVOID IF YOU HAVE EXISTING HEART OR BLOOD PRESSURE ISSUES »** THE DROP IN OXYGEN LEVELS CAUSED BY INHALING NITROUS OXIDE CAN PUT YOU AT GREATER RISK OF PROBLEMS

**DON'T SMOKE »** GASES CAN IGNITE OR EXPLODE SO BE SURE NOT TO USE ANY FLAMES OR CIGARETTES WHEN USING NITROUS OXIDE

**EAT »** ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE VEGETARIAN OR ANAEMIC TO REPLENISH VITAMIN B12 - MARMITE, EGGS & CHEESE ARE GOOD FOR THIS - OR TAKE A SUPPLEMENT

**BE IN A SAFE PLACE »** YOUR COORDINATION MAY BE AFFECTED SO AVOID DANGEROUS PLACES WHERE YOU MIGHT SLIP, FALL OR HAVE AN ACCIDENT. DON'T DRIVE OR OPERATE MACHINERY

**DON'T MIX »** PARTICULARLY WITH OTHER DEPRESSANTS SUCH AS ALCOHOL THAT ALSO SLOW YOUR BODY DOWN OR STIMULANTS THAT CAN INCREASE PRESSURE ON THE HEART

**DON'T USE ALONE »** HAVING PEOPLE YOU TRUST AROUND IS ALWAYS A GOOD THING IF THINGS GO WRONG OR YOU FEEL UNWELL

**LOOK AFTER YOUR MATES »** IF SOMEONE HAS AN ADVERSE REACTION CALL AN AMBULANCE & KEEP THEM CALM UNTIL IT ARRIVES - KEEP THEIR AIRWAY OPEN & PUT THEM IN THE RECOVERY POSITION IF YOU KNOW IT

**DON'T SCARE PEOPLE »** THIS COULD LEAD TO A RUSH OF ADRENALINE INCREASING THE RISK OF HEART ISSUES OR DEATH

**BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU GET IT FROM »** YOU MAY BE SUPPLIED WITH MORE DANGEROUS GASES SUCH AS BUTANE

HARM REDUCTION



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