Thank you for choosing Boston Children’s Hospital for your child’s dental care. Providing your family with quality care and service is very important to us. If your child needs treatment right away, we’ll add them to our waiting list. Our staff will call you if we have a cancellation.

**Please read this sheet to understand what will happen during your visit.**

What is nitrous oxide and how does it work?

Nitrous oxide—also known as laughing gas—is a mix of oxygen and nitrous oxide. We may use it during dental procedures for these reasons:

* To help your child stay relaxed
* If your child gags easily
* If it’s a long procedure

Nitrous oxide has a pleasant smell and a sweet taste. The gas will not make your child fall asleep. Instead, it will make them feel relaxed and calm.

We only give nitrous oxide to children who we think will benefit from it.

How is nitrous oxide given?

* Your child will breathe in nitrous oxide through a mask placed on their nose. The gas starts to take effect in 3-5 minutes.
* The effect of the nitrous oxide only lasts the length of the appointment. It’s very safe.

Can my child eat as usual before the appointment?

* Your child may have a light meal or snack (like Jell-O®, bananas, rice, applesauce or toast) up to 2 hours before the appointment.
* Please do not let them have any greasy food or foods high in protein (like chicken, steak or fish).

Are there any side effects?

Some children may feel dizzy, nauseous or throw up. But this is rare.

What should I do before the appointment?

* We recommend that you contact your dental insurance company before a treatment using nitrous oxide. You may need a **pre-determination**. This is a review by your insurer’s medical team to see if this treatment is   
    
  right for your child. This usually takes 4-6 weeks to complete.
* You’ll be responsible for paying any costs not covered by your insurance.

What happens after the appointment?

* You will schedule your next visit when you check out.
* You will pay the remaining costs for the treatment (if you have them).
* **If your child has pain or swelling after treatment, please call us right away at (617) 355-6571.**

We look forward to providing your child’s care and helping to get your family ready for your visit. Please call us if you have questions.

When should I cancel or reschedule my appointment?

Please call us **2 business days** before your appointment to reschedule if your child has any of these during the **2 weeks** before the procedure:

* Conjunctivitis (eye infection)
* A fever (100°F/37°C)
* Cold symptoms, like a runny nose or cough
* Sore throat or strep throat

Also call to reschedule if your child has any of these during the **4 weeks** before the procedure:

* Pneumonia
* The flu
* Croup/wheezing
* Is exposed to someone who has the chicken pox, measles, mumps or rubella

Contact us

Call the Department of Dentistry and ask for the surgical scheduler:

**(617) 355-6571**