

NITROUS OXIDE **(Nitronox)**

THERAPEUTIC CLASSIFICATION:

- analgesic gas

INDICATIONS:

- to provide relief from moderate to severe pain
- anxiety

MECHANISM OF ACTION:

- a self-administered gas composed of 50% nitrous oxide and 50% oxygen
- has strong analgesic properties that last only 2-5 minutes after administration ceases
- produces rapid, reversible relief from pain
- decreases sensitivity to pain
- decreases perception of pain and reduces anxiety

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

- altered level of consciousness
- closed head injury (increases ICP)
- abdominal distention/suspected abdominal trauma/abdominal pain of unknown origin
- COPD
- thoracic trauma (with potential for pneumothorax)
- shock
- pulmonary edema (need 100% oxygen)
- suspected pulmonary embolism
- alcohol/drug intoxication

PRECAUTIONS:

- monitor vitals and LOC
- be alert for n/v
- be prepared to protect the airway
- should always be patient administered
- make sure ambulance is well-vented

SIDE EFFECTS:

- lightheadedness
- decreased LOC
- nausea/vomiting
- increased ICP in head injury patients
- will diffuse and increase the size of a pneumothorax

DOSAGE:

- self-administered (demand valve) by the patient until pain has been relieved

ROUTE:

- inhalation

SPECIAL INFORMATION:

- onset of effect usually within the first few breaths
- completely reversible within 5 minutes after stoppage
- does not mask signs and symptoms as narcotics do
- analgesic effect potentiated by other analgesics and sedatives