

# NITROUS OXIDE: THE FACTS

## WHAT IS NITROUS OXIDE?

When you inhale Nitrous oxide the effects are felt immediately. Nitrous oxide produces a rapid rush of feeling good, and feeling of floating or excitement for a short period of time.

Nitrous oxide is also called nangs, laughing gas, nitro, N<sub>2</sub>O, NOS, whippet, hippy crack, buzz bomb, balloons.

## IF YOU USE TOO MUCH TOO OFTEN

If you use too much nitrous oxide (using lots of bulbs or from large canisters), or use it for too long, you can cause serious harm to your brain and body. In some people it can cause trouble walking. Other effects include:

- numbness or tingling in your hands and feet,
- problems with thinking and memory,
- a low level of healthy red cells in your blood,
- confusion,
- dizziness,
- low blood pressure and
- psychosis (difficulty knowing what is real and what is not).

Some of these problems can become permanent.

Some people think that taking vitamin B12 prevents any damage. This is not true. Too much nitrous oxide stops the body's ability to use Vitamin B12.

Using nitrous oxide from lots of bulbs is dangerous. Using nitrous from a big canister or tank can be even worse, because of the amount you inhale.

Nitrous oxide is very cold as it comes out of a bulb or canister. If you inhale it directly, it can cause frostbite or burns to the nose, lips or throat.

Never use nitrous oxide alone. Using too much nitrous oxide can reduce the oxygen in the body and make you pass out or even cause death.

## GET HELP

If you experience any bad effects from using nitrous oxide like numbness or tingling in your arms or legs, you need to see a doctor or go to a hospital emergency department.

If you can't wake someone up or you are concerned that they may have a head injury from a fall after using nitrous oxide - call **000** and ask for an ambulance immediately.

## TALK TO SOMEONE

An interpreter service is available at the Alcohol and Drug Information Service. Call **1800 250 015** and ask for an interpreter at the start of your call.

This service offers free and confidential advice about alcohol and other drugs 24 hours, 7 days a week.

To find out more about nitrous oxide [click here](#).

