NITROUS OXIDE (NITRONOX)

PHARMACOLOGY & MECHANISM OF ACTIONS:
- Medical gas
- Analgesic
- CNS depressant
- Potent analgesic effects when inhaled
- Duration 2-5 minutes of last inhalation
  In the pre-hospital setting nitrous oxide is used in a 50-50 mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen

INDICATIONS:
- Pain relief, including fractures, burns, chest pain
- Severe anxiety

CONTRAINDICATIONS:
- Patient with altered mental status, including head injury, drug and alcohol intoxication
- Patients with COPD
- Patients with thoracic injury, including suspected or possible pneumothorax
- Patients with severe, undiagnosed abdominal pain

ADMINISTRATION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A-EMT</th>
<th>ADULT</th>
<th>PEDIATRIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50%-50% mix of nitrous oxide and oxygen</td>
<td>SAME AS ADULT</td>
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<td>Must be self administered by patient until pain relief is achieved or patient drops mask</td>
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PRECAUTIONS & SIDE EFFECTS:
- Dizziness
- Light-headedness
- Altered level of consciousness
- Hallucinations
- Nausea

SPECIAL NOTES:
- Nitrous oxide is in liquid state in its bottle. Ensure the bottle remains in the upright position when the bottle is open and especially during patient administration.
- Nitrous oxide can potentiate the effects of other CNS depressants such as narcotics, sedatives, hypnotics and alcohol.
- Nitrous oxide tends to diffuse into enclosed spaces easier than oxygen, causing swelling and increased pressure in these spaces. Because of this effect nitrous can increase the size of pneumothorax and cause bleb (in COPD patients) to rupture leading to pneumothorax.