

**Nitrous oxide. It's a greenhouse gas. It's an internal combustion engine stimulant, a rocket fuel and one very stupid way to get high.**

#### NITROUS IS DEATH AT THE DOOR.

Nitrous oxide is used by dentists and doctors to make people senseless enough to ignore pain of surgery. When a medical professional gives a patient "laughing gas" they mix it with oxygen. The mask passes a very weak solution of nitrous in pure oxygen. The doctors and dentists do that so that the damage to their patient's brain will be minimized – but there is still some damage.

When users inhale (or "huff") nitrous they're taking it pure, quick, and in large amounts. They're putting themselves at serious risk of short- and long-term harm. Scientists still don't fully understand how nitrous operates, but they all agree – nitrous abuse is a bad idea.

#### WHAT IS IT

Nitrous oxide, or  $N_2O$ , is an invisible, non-flammable gas with a slightly sweet smell. It's sold in tanks like the ones used to fill party balloons.



#### NITROUS IN THE BRAIN

Nitrous oxide chokes your brain like a noose chokes your neck. When a user inhales  $N_2O$  their brain is deprived of oxygen as surely as if they were drowning. Scientists don't totally understand how  $N_2O$  causes the effects that abusers are seeking. A lot of very complex chemical changes occur during nitrous abuse use.

Laboratory tests show that nitrous ultimately operates on some of the same principles of heroin and other very dangerous drugs of abuse: dopamine excitation.

***"The only safe hit of nitrous is the one you don't take."***

## RESOURCES

National Institute On Drug Abuse

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/infofacts/inhalants.html>

NarcAnon Canada

<http://www.narconon.ca/inhalants.htm>

Wired Magazine

<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2007/12/chem-lab-the-do/>

**in the know**

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# NITROUS OXIDE

*drowning on  
dry land*





HOW IS NITROUS USED?

Nitrous is usually inhaled out of balloons sold at concerts, parties and festivals. The habit of the user determines the size and number of the balloons: the stronger the addiction, the more nitrous they want. Some people only do nitrous at social events, buying balloons for up to \$10 each. Some will purchase entire tanks for themselves and fill giant balloons, doing nothing but inhaling the gas all day and night.

STREET NAMES OF NITROUS OXIDE

There are many quite a few slang terms for nitrous oxide. Here are the most common:

- Crackers
- Laughing Gas
- Hissers
- Happy Gas
- Hippy Crack
- Whippets
- NOS
- Gas
- N<sub>2</sub>O
- Fool Fuel

If someone offers you any of those, they're offering you a chance to fall on your face and choke to death while laughing.



whippets

NITROUS OXIDE AND THE MIND

Nitrous has a very strong effect on the mind. The term “hippy crack” is used to describe nitrous because of how incredibly addictive it is. One hit causes intense otherworldly feelings for just a couple of minutes. It’s that feeling of being spaced-out and giddy that nitrous abusers are looking for. Since it only lasts a very short time and wears off completely, users keep coming back for more again and again. It’s a repetitive cycle of immediate addiction.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT NITROUS OXIDE

Most nitrous deaths occur due to clumsiness, thoughtlessness and unconsciousness. Users die by falling or crashing. They pass out with masks on, still pumping nitrous. They pass out in rooms full of nitrous, or with the tank leaking gas. Without oxygen available, they drown on dry land. Using nitrous recreationally, or purchasing it for recreational use, is illegal for *anyone* of *any* age. Nitrous dealers are not freedom-loving hippies, and they’re not interested in your wellbeing. They’re notoriously violent, profit-rabid drug dealers that have earned themselves the nickname “The Nitrous Mafia” thanks to their brutality.



Nitrous is not thought of as a ‘date rape drug’ but the helplessness and desperation it causes makes you very easily exploited.

SHORT-TERM EFFECTS OF USING NITROUS

One hit of nitrous is enough to literally knock a grown man down. One lungful will commonly make people drop to the ground, senseless, like a sack of bricks. Users will inhale from a balloon, feel like they’re on another planet and come to a minute later laying on the ground with their face broken and bloody.

Immediate symptoms of nitrous use are:

- Decreased mental ability
- Clumsiness
- Uncontrollable laughter
- Hallucinations
- Disconnection with reality

hallucinations

ONE HIT OF NITROUS IS ENOUGH TO LITERALLY KNOCK A GROWN MAN DOWN.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF USING NITROUS

Chronic nitrous use can lead to severe vitamin b12 deficiency. B12 is necessary to your nervous system. Without b12 your nerves start to die, usually starting at the finger and toe tips. This can also damage your spinal chord, meaning you’re at high risk for paralysis or even death. B12 deficiency also causes anemia; that means your blood can’t carry oxygen properly. Then there are sleep/wake cycle disturbances, mood disorders, disorganized thought processes and reproductive problems. All this and more can be yours for five minutes of dizziness and a bloody nose!

BURST THE BALLOON

The only safe hit of nitrous is the one you don’t take. If you see someone using nitrous, walk away. If you are offered nitrous, turn it down and get out of there. If a friend is using nitrous, tell them it’s a bad idea and try to get them help.

**Nitrous is for surgery, not for fun.**  
**Stay safe. Stay conscious.**  
**Stay away from nitrous.**

