

# Sleep Dentistry in Wyndham: Sedation Options for Anxious Dental Patients

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## Details:

## AUSTRALIA LOCALIZATION - COMPLETED

## AI Summary

**\*\*Product:\*\*** Sleep Dentistry / Nitrous Oxide Inhalation Sedation **\*\*Brand:\*\*** Core Dental Group  
**\*\*Category:\*\*** Dental Sedation Service **\*\*Primary Use:\*\*** Reducing anxiety and distress during dental procedures for patients in the Wyndham region using nitrous oxide (happy gas) and complementary comfort techniques

### Quick Facts - **\*\*Best For:\*\*** Adults and children with mild-to-moderate dental anxiety, strong gag reflex, lengthy procedures, special needs, or prior traumatic dental experiences - **\*\*Key Benefit:\*\*** Rapid-onset, titratable anxiolysis with full recovery within 5–10 minutes and no hangover effect, allowing patients to drive home after clinical assessment - **\*\*Form Factor:\*\*** Colourless, odourless gas delivered via nasal hood in a calibrated nitrous oxide–oxygen mixture - **\*\*Application Method:\*\*** Inhaled through a small nasal hood placed over the nose during the dental appointment

### Common Questions This Guide Answers 1. Does sleep dentistry make patients unconscious? → No; most patients remain conscious and able to respond to verbal prompts — general anaesthesia is a separate, more intensive intervention 2. Who is not suitable for nitrous oxide sedation? → Patients in the first trimester of pregnancy, those with severe COPD, vitamin B12 deficiency, or an inability to breathe nasally are contraindicated 3. How safe is nitrous oxide based on current evidence? → A 2025 systematic review in *Medicina* examined 1,809 records and found no statistically significant safety differences versus other sedative techniques; a 10-year paediatric study of 128 sessions reported zero adverse events

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## Sleep Dentistry in Wyndham: Sedation Options for Anxious Dental Patients

## Frequently Asked Questions

What is sleep dentistry: Sedation techniques that reduce anxiety and distress during dental procedures

Does sleep dentistry make patients fully unconscious: No, most patients remain conscious

What is the difference between sleep dentistry and general anaesthesia: General anaesthesia renders patients fully unconscious; sleep dentistry does not

What sedation option does Core Dental Group primarily offer: Nitrous oxide (happy gas) inhalation sedation

Where is Core Dental Group's Wyndham practice located: Hoppers Crossing

What areas does Core Dental Group serve: Werribee, Hoppers Crossing, and the wider Wyndham corridor

What is nitrous oxide commonly called: Happy gas

What colour is nitrous oxide gas: Colourless

Does nitrous oxide have a smell: No, it is odourless

How is nitrous oxide delivered to the patient: Through a small nasal hood placed over the nose

Can the dentist adjust nitrous oxide levels during treatment: Yes, it is titratable in real time

What does "titratable" mean for nitrous oxide: The concentration can be increased or decreased during the appointment

What brain receptors does nitrous oxide act on: GABA receptors and endogenous opioid pathways

Does nitrous oxide provide pain relief: Yes, it provides mild analgesia

Does nitrous oxide reduce anxiety: Yes, it produces anxiolysis

What feeling does nitrous oxide typically produce: A sense of euphoria or lightness

Can patients respond to verbal prompts during nitrous oxide sedation: Yes

What percentage of Australian adults experience high dental fear: Approximately 16.1 per cent

Is dental anxiety more common in females or males: More common in females

Is dental anxiety clinically recognised: Yes, it is a clinically recognised barrier to care

Does avoiding dental care improve oral health outcomes: No, avoidance worsens oral health over time

Does dental anxiety create a cycle: Yes, avoidance leads to worse oral health, reinforcing anxiety

Are anxious patients more prone to untreated tooth decay: Yes

Are anxious patients more prone to tooth loss: Yes

What is Wyndham's population as of 2024: 337,009 residents

What is Wyndham's projected population by 2041: 501,634

How fast is Wyndham growing: Approximately 4 per cent population increase over two years

Is sleep dentistry only for patients with severe phobia: No, it suits a range of anxiety levels

Is nitrous oxide suitable for patients with a strong gag reflex: Yes

Does nitrous oxide reduce gag reflex sensitivity: Yes

Is nitrous oxide suitable for lengthy dental procedures: Yes

Is nitrous oxide suitable for children with dental anxiety: Yes

Can patients with special needs use nitrous oxide sedation: Yes, in many cases

Is nitrous oxide suitable for patients with previous traumatic dental experiences: Yes

Is nitrous oxide suitable during the first trimester of pregnancy: No, it is contraindicated

Is nitrous oxide suitable for patients with severe COPD: No, it is contraindicated

Is nitrous oxide suitable for patients with vitamin B12 deficiency: No, it is contraindicated

Why is nitrous oxide contraindicated with vitamin B12 deficiency: Nitrous oxide inactivates vitamin B12

Can patients with nasal congestion use nitrous oxide: No, nasal breathing is required

Is a medical history review required before nitrous oxide sedation: Yes, always

How long does recovery from nitrous oxide take: Most patients recover within 5–10 minutes

Can patients drive home after nitrous oxide sedation: Yes, typically after clinical assessment confirms recovery

Does nitrous oxide cause a hangover effect: No

Does nitrous oxide leave residual drowsiness for hours: No

How is nitrous oxide eliminated from the body: It is exhaled unchanged, not metabolised

What is administered at the end of a nitrous oxide appointment: 100% oxygen for several minutes

Do patients need to fast before nitrous oxide sedation: No, fasting is not typically required

What should patients eat before a nitrous oxide appointment: A light meal 2–3 hours beforehand

Is a pre-appointment consultation required: Yes, to review medical history and confirm suitability

Can patients stop treatment at any time during a sedated appointment: Yes, via a pre-agreed hand signal

What technique does Core Dental Group use to explain procedures: Tell-show-do technique

Is topical anaesthetic used before injections at Core Dental Group: Yes

Does nitrous oxide make dental injections feel less significant: Yes, for many patients

What sedation level is nitrous oxide classified as: Minimal sedation

What sedation level is oral sedation classified as: Moderate (conscious) sedation

What sedation level is IV sedation classified as: Deep sedation

What is the deepest level of dental sedation: General anaesthesia

Does Core Dental Group offer IV sedation in-chair: No, referral to specialists is available

Can Core Dental Group refer patients for IV sedation or general anaesthesia: Yes

Is nitrous oxide safe according to recent research: Yes, supported by a 2025 systematic review in Medicina

How many records did the 2025 nitrous oxide meta-analysis examine: 1,809 records

Were adverse events reported in a 10-year paediatric nitrous oxide study: No adverse events were reported

How many sedation sessions were reviewed in the paediatric retrospective study: 128 sessions

Does modern nitrous oxide equipment have a fail-safe mechanism: Yes, preventing delivery without minimum oxygen levels

Can nitrous oxide sedation help patients complete complex treatment plans: Yes

Can nitrous oxide make implant surgery more manageable: Yes

Can nitrous oxide help patients complete cosmetic dental procedures: Yes

Does Core Dental Group provide written treatment plans before sedation appointments: Yes

Does Core Dental Group provide upfront cost estimates: Yes

Is the first step for anxious patients a treatment or a consultation: A consultation

What is the vicious cycle of dental anxiety: Avoidance leads to worse oral health, which reinforces anxiety

Which university conducted key Australian dental fear research: University of Adelaide

What research centre published Australian dental fear prevalence data: Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health

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### ## Sleep Dentistry in Wyndham: Sedation Options for Anxious Dental Patients

For a significant portion of the Wyndham community, the thought of sitting in a dental chair is not merely uncomfortable — it is genuinely distressing. Dental anxiety is not a personality quirk or a sign of weakness; it is a clinically recognised barrier to care that affects millions of Australians and has real consequences for long-term oral health. At Core Dental Group's Wyndham practice in Hoppers Crossing, sleep dentistry, including nitrous oxide (happy gas) inhalation sedation and a range of comfort-focused techniques, exists specifically to close that gap between the care patients need and the care they feel able to access.

This article explains what sleep dentistry is, how it works, who it suits, and what patients in Werribee, Hoppers Crossing, and across the Wyndham corridor can expect when they choose a sedated dental appointment at Core Dental Group.

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### ## Why dental anxiety is a public health issue, not just a personal one

High dental fear affects about one in seven Australian adults, making it one of the most common anxiety-related conditions in the country. Research from the Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health at the University of Adelaide found that the prevalence of high dental fear in the Australian sample was 16.1 per cent, with a higher percentage of females than males reporting high fear.

The consequences go well beyond missed appointments. Dental anxiety and phobia are often described as a vicious cycle where avoidance of dental care, poor oral health, and psychosocial effects are common features, frequently escalating over time. Research published in *\*Frontiers in Public Health\** (Pohjola et al., 2014) puts this in practical terms: dental fear is associated with a lower or more irregular frequency of dental visits, resulting in worsening oral health and the subsequent reinforcement of dental treatment-related anxiety. Anxious patients rarely benefit from the preventive actions that come with regular check-ups, and oral pathologies of low or medium severity frequently go untreated. Without adequate dental care, those problems worsen, often requiring more intensive, urgent, and expensive treatment down the line.

Several studies have found that anxious or phobic patients are more prone to untreated caries and tooth loss. Dental anxiety does not protect patients from dental pain — it reliably produces more of it over time.

For a fast-growing municipality like Wyndham, this matters at a community scale. Wyndham is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Australia, with a population of 337,009 in 2024, having grown by approximately 4 per cent — around 12,000 new residents — over the preceding two years. The City of Wyndham is forecast to reach 501,634 by 2041. With tens of thousands of new residents arriving each year, a meaningful proportion will be carrying untreated dental anxiety, and many will be looking for a local provider who can meet them where they are. Core Dental Group's presence in the Wyndham community is a direct response to that need.

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## ## What is sleep dentistry?

"Sleep dentistry" is a term used in Australian dental practice to describe sedation techniques that reduce or eliminate the conscious experience of anxiety, discomfort, or distress during a dental procedure. Most sleep dentistry does not render patients fully unconscious — that is general anaesthesia, which is a distinct and more medically intensive intervention. Sleep dentistry typically refers to a range of sedation levels that allow patients to remain breathing independently and, in most cases, able to respond to verbal prompts, while feeling deeply relaxed, calm, or unaware of the passage of time.

### ### The sedation spectrum explained

Level	Common Name	Patient State	Typical Dental Use	--- --- --- ---	Minimal sedation
Happy gas / Nitrous oxide	Relaxed, fully conscious	Mild-to-moderate anxiety, routine and complex procedures	Moderate (conscious) sedation   Oral sedation   Drowsy, responsive	Moderate-to-severe anxiety	Deep sedation   IV sedation   Barely responsive   Complex surgery, severe phobia
General anaesthesia	GA	Unconscious	Hospital-based, complex surgical cases		

At Core Dental Group's Wyndham practice, the primary in-chair sedation option is nitrous oxide (N $\blacksquare$ O) inhalation sedation — the most widely used, evidence-supported, and clinically appropriate choice for the majority of anxious dental patients in a general and specialist dental setting.

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## ## Nitrous oxide (happy gas): how it works and what the evidence says

### ### The mechanism

Nitrous oxide is a colourless, odourless gas delivered through a small nosepiece (nasal hood) in a calibrated mixture with oxygen. It acts on the central nervous system, primarily through GABA receptors and endogenous opioid pathways, to produce anxiolysis (anxiety reduction), mild analgesia (pain relief), and a sense of euphoria or lightness. The name "happy gas" reflects that characteristic feeling of wellbeing.

Nitrous oxide is titratable, meaning the dentist can increase or decrease the concentration of gas in real time based on the patient's response. This is a significant safety advantage over oral or intravenous sedation agents, which cannot be adjusted once administered. Because N $\blacksquare$ O is not metabolised by the body and is exhaled unchanged, the risk of overdose is minimal.

### ### Safety profile

A 2025 systematic review and meta-analysis published in *\*Medicina\** (Piccialli et al., Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli) examined 1,809 records from Embase, PubMed, and CENTRAL. No statistically significant differences were found between N $\blacksquare$ O and other sedative techniques across all outcomes evaluated, including patient satisfaction and successful procedure completion. A separate 10-year retrospective study of nitrous oxide–oxygen sedation in paediatric patients found no adverse events during or after 128 sedation sessions, consistent with prior research on its safety profile.

Modern gas delivery units include a fail-safe mechanism that prevents nitrous oxide from being delivered without a minimum level of oxygen, adding a further layer of protection.

### ### Recovery

Because N $\blacksquare$ O is exhaled unchanged rather than metabolised, most patients are fully recovered within minutes of the nosepiece being removed. Unlike oral or IV sedation, patients who receive only nitrous oxide can typically drive themselves home after the appointment, though individual clinical assessment always applies.

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## ## Who is a suitable candidate for sleep dentistry at Core Dental Group?

Sleep dentistry is not exclusively for patients with severe phobia. The following groups are commonly appropriate candidates for nitrous oxide sedation:

- **\*\*Patients with mild-to-moderate dental anxiety\*\*** — those who experience significant apprehension but have not avoided the dentist entirely
- **\*\*Patients with a strong gag reflex\*\*** — nitrous oxide can reduce gag reflex hypersensitivity, making impressions, X-rays, and treatment more comfortable
- **\*\*Patients requiring lengthy or complex procedures\*\*** — multiple extractions, implant placements, or full-mouth restorations completed in fewer, longer appointments
- **\*\*Patients with special needs or disabilities\*\*** — those for whom standard dental communication and behavioural management techniques are not sufficient
- **\*\*Children with significant dental anxiety\*\*** — paediatric patients who struggle with routine dental care (see our guide on *\*Children's Dentistry in Wyndham: Paediatric Dental Care for Hoppers Crossing Families\** for more on managing dental anxiety in young patients)
- **\*\*Patients who have had previous traumatic dental experiences\*\*** — a prior painful or distressing appointment is one of the most common reasons for ongoing dental avoidance

### ### Who may not be suitable

Nitrous oxide is not appropriate for every patient. Contraindications include:

- First trimester of pregnancy
- Severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or respiratory conditions affecting nasal breathing
- Known vitamin B12 deficiency or related metabolic disorders (nitrous oxide inactivates vitamin B12)
- Certain psychiatric conditions requiring specific clinical assessment
- Patients who cannot breathe through their nose, such as those with nasal congestion

A thorough medical history review is always conducted at Core Dental Group before any sedation is administered, and patients with complex medical histories are assessed individually.

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## ## What to expect: before, during, and after a sedated appointment

### ### Before your appointment

1. **\*\*Initial consultation\*\*** — Your dentist will review your medical history, discuss your anxiety triggers, and confirm your suitability for nitrous oxide sedation. This is also the time to ask questions and establish a clear communication signal, such as raising your hand, to pause treatment at any point.
2. **\*\*Treatment planning\*\*** — A written treatment plan and upfront cost estimate will be provided. (See our guide on *\*Dental Payment Plans & Health Fund Options at Core Dental Group\** for information on financing sedation appointments.)
3. **\*\*Pre-appointment instructions\*\*** — Patients are generally advised to eat a light meal 2–3 hours before the appointment and to wear comfortable clothing. Unlike IV sedation, nitrous oxide does not typically require fasting.

### ### During your appointment

1. The nasal hood is placed comfortably over the nose — it is small, lightweight, and unobtrusive
2. A mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen is delivered at a low concentration initially, then adjusted upward over several minutes until the patient reaches a comfortable level of relaxation
3. Local anaesthetic is administered as needed — many patients find that the anxiolytic effect of nitrous oxide makes the injection itself feel far less significant
4. The dental procedure is completed while the patient remains conscious, calm, and able to communicate
5. At the end of the appointment, 100% oxygen is delivered for several minutes to clear residual nitrous oxide from the system

### ### After your appointment

- Most patients feel entirely normal within 5–10 minutes of the nosepiece being removed - Nitrous oxide leaves no hangover effect — unlike oral sedation, patients are not drowsy for hours afterward - Patients who received only nitrous oxide (with no oral sedative medication) are generally able to resume normal activities, including driving, after clinical assessment confirms full recovery

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### ## Beyond happy gas: the full comfort framework at Core Dental Group

Nitrous oxide works best as part of a broader, patient-centred approach. At Core Dental Group, this includes:

- **Tell-show-do technique** — explaining each step of a procedure before performing it, reducing the fear of the unknown - **Patient-controlled stop signals** — patients retain full control to pause treatment at any time - **Distraction techniques** — music, conversation, and a calm clinical environment - **Topical anaesthetic** — applied before any injection to minimise the sensation of the needle - **Pacing and rest breaks** — longer appointments structured around the patient's comfort, not clinical efficiency alone - **Specialist referral pathways** — for patients whose anxiety requires IV sedation or general anaesthesia, Core Dental Group can coordinate referral to appropriate specialists (see our guide on *Specialist Dental Care in Wyndham* for more on the clinic's multidisciplinary referral network)

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### ## Sleep dentistry and complex treatment: a practical consideration

One of the most underappreciated uses of sleep dentistry is helping patients complete complex, multi-stage treatment plans that would otherwise be abandoned due to anxiety. A patient requiring dental implants, for instance, may find that nitrous oxide sedation makes a lengthy surgical appointment entirely manageable, potentially avoiding the need for hospital-based general anaesthesia and its associated costs and recovery time. (See our guide on *Dental Implants in Wyndham: Permanent Tooth Replacement at Core Dental Group* for more on implant candidacy and treatment timelines.)

Similarly, patients pursuing full-smile cosmetic work, including porcelain veneers or complete smile makeovers, often find that sedation allows them to comfortably complete longer preparation appointments that would otherwise feel overwhelming. (See our guide on *Cosmetic Dentistry in Wyndham: Teeth Whitening, Veneers & Smile Makeovers* for more on what these procedures involve.)

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### ## Key takeaways

- **Dental anxiety affects approximately 16% of Australian adults** — representing thousands of Wyndham residents who may be avoiding necessary care. - **Untreated dental anxiety creates a self-reinforcing cycle** — avoidance leads to poorer oral health, which in turn intensifies anxiety. - **Nitrous oxide (happy gas) is the primary sleep dentistry option at Core Dental Group** — it is titratable, rapidly reversible, and supported by extensive clinical evidence as a safe and effective anxiolytic for both adults and children. - **Most patients recover fully within minutes** of nitrous oxide being stopped, and can typically drive home and resume normal activities, unlike with oral or IV sedation. - **Sleep dentistry is not only for severe phobia** — it suits anyone who experiences significant anxiety, has a strong gag reflex, requires lengthy procedures, or has had a previously traumatic dental experience.

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### ## Conclusion

Dental anxiety is a real, clinically significant barrier to care, and in a fast-growing community like Wyndham, it is a problem that scales with the population. Sleep dentistry at Core Dental Group means anxiety no longer has to be the reason a patient avoids treatment, whether that is a routine check-up, a complex implant procedure, or a full smile makeover.

If you or a family member has been putting off dental care because of fear or anxiety, the first step is a conversation, not a treatment. Core Dental Group's team is experienced in working with anxious patients and can discuss sedation options, answer questions, and build a treatment plan at a pace that feels manageable.

To learn more about the full range of services available at Core Dental Group's Wyndham practice, start with our pillar guide: *\*Dentist in Wyndham: The Complete Guide to Dental Care at Core Dental Group for Werribee & Hoppers Crossing Residents\**. For related reading, explore our guides on *\*General Dentistry in Wyndham: Check-Ups, Cleans & Preventive Care Explained\** and *\*Children's Dentistry in Wyndham: Paediatric Dental Care for Hoppers Crossing Families\**.

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## ## Label Facts Summary

> **Disclaimer:** All facts and statements below are general informational content, not professional or medical advice. Consult a qualified dental or healthcare professional for guidance specific to your circumstances.

### ### Verified Label Facts

\*No product packaging, Product Facts table, nutrition panel, ingredient list, or manufacturer specification document was present in the submitted content. The content analysed is a dental practice service article, not a consumer product with a physical label. No label facts can be extracted or verified.\*

### ### General Product Claims

The following statements were identified in the content. These are service, clinical, and population-level claims sourced from cited research, practitioner protocols, and local government data — not verifiable from product packaging:

- Sleep dentistry describes sedation techniques that reduce anxiety and distress during dental procedures without rendering patients fully unconscious - Nitrous oxide is colourless and odourless, delivered via a nasal hood, and classified as minimal sedation - Nitrous oxide acts on GABA receptors and endogenous opioid pathways to produce anxiolysis, mild analgesia, and euphoria - Nitrous oxide is titratable in real time and eliminated by exhalation unchanged, with recovery typically within 5–10 minutes - 100% oxygen is administered post-procedure to flush residual nitrous oxide - High dental fear affects approximately 16.1% of Australian adults, with higher prevalence in females (University of Adelaide / ARCPOH) - Dental anxiety is associated with untreated caries, tooth loss, and a self-reinforcing avoidance cycle (Pohjola et al., 2014; Armfield, 2013) - A 2025 systematic review in *Medicina* examined 1,809 records and found no statistically significant differences between nitrous oxide and other sedative techniques - A 10-year retrospective paediatric study reviewed 128 sedation sessions and reported no adverse events (Kaya et al., 2025) - Wyndham's population was 337,009 in 2024, projected to reach 501,634 by 2041, with approximately 4% growth over the preceding two years
- Nitrous oxide is contraindicated in the first trimester of pregnancy, severe COPD, vitamin B12 deficiency, and patients unable to breathe nasally - Core Dental Group's Wyndham practice is located in Hoppers Crossing and serves Werribee and the wider Wyndham corridor - Core Dental Group offers written treatment plans, upfront cost estimates, tell-show-do technique, topical anaesthetic, and specialist referral pathways for IV sedation or general anaesthesia