



# Benefit from Nitrous Oxide in Anesthesia and Pain Treatment

**An update on more than 100 years' experience in the safety and efficacy of Nitrous Oxide by the European Industrial Gases Association (EIGA).**

EIGA has published an updated document on *the 'Best Practice and Safe use of medicinal Nitrous Oxide'* EIGA [Doc 153](#), to **promote the safe use of medicinal Nitrous Oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) and N<sub>2</sub>O mixtures and to raise awareness on the misuse of these medicinal products.**

Nitrous Oxide is a pharmaceutical product used as an anesthetic and analgesic for over 100 years and still widely used in hospitals and ambulatory care.

Safety data from millions of patients and from long term observation in registered studies and clinical trials have confirmed the N<sub>2</sub>O safety profile and the benefits in patient treatment.

Due to non-medicinal N<sub>2</sub>O being readily availability on the internet and its application in non-clinical settings, it has become popular as a recreational drug.

To highlight this risk, EIGA has issued a Position Paper [PP 24](#) and a Safety Information document [SI 38](#), addressing this misuse. Both documents are free to download from [www.eiga.eu](http://www.eiga.eu)

Most reported cases of misuse are related to non-medical use. Still, EIGA supports the requirement of the national competent authorities to strengthen the emphasis of the safe use of medicinal N<sub>2</sub>O with a change in the product information of marketing authorisations.

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Through this article, EIGA would also like to create awareness for the safe use and potential misuse of Nitrous Oxide by healthcare professionals and other staff handling these products.

Regarding occupational exposure, EIGA reminds users that

**ventilation or similar means of control such as scavenging systems, on-demand valves or for large rooms a door or window which can be opened, decrease the risk of exceeding safe occupational exposure limits.**

With the purpose of raising safety awareness and to promote the safe use of medicinal N<sub>2</sub>O in the clinical setting, EIGA recommends the *'Best Practice and Safe use of medicinal Nitrous Oxide'* EIGA [Doc 153](#) as a reference. Based on scientific evidence, this document provides healthcare professionals with updated information that will enable them to bring to patients the beneficial qualities of Nitrous Oxide whilst mitigating any potential safety breaches.

#### About the European Industrial Gases Association

Founded in 1923, the European Industrial Gases Association (EIGA) is a safety and technically oriented organisation representing the vast majority of European and also non-European companies producing and distributing industrial, medical and food gases. The member companies closely co-operate in technical and safety matters to achieve the highest level of safety and environmental care in the handling of gases. EIGA is in frequent touch with Standardisation and Regulatory Organisations and Authorities as well as trade and industrial organisations. EIGA's membership comprises European companies that produce or distribute industrial and/or medical gases. As such, EIGA itself does not produce or market industrial or medical gases.

For more information, visit [www.eiga.eu](http://www.eiga.eu) or follow us on [LinkedIn](#)

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