

Nitrous Oxide

About: medically, used in anaesthesia. Found in propellants used for whipped cream. Sold in small “whippets” – pressure vessels – which can be discharged in to a balloon.

AKA: N2O, Laughing Gas, ‘Hippy Crack,’ Nitrox, Whippets

Popularity 7.6% of 16-24 yr olds reported use 2013/14, up from 6.1% in previous yr. (CSEW 2014)

Method of Use: gas discharged in to balloon and inhaled; rarely from cylinder via mask

Duration: under 5 minutes/balloon

Effects: mild euphoria, hilarity, sense of disassociation, disorientation, reduced sense of pain; enhanced experience of other psychedelics



Law: POM if sold as anesthetic. Unregulated if used as food-stuff.

Cost: £1/balloon; £1-2/whippet



Source: on-line; festivals, street vendors, legal high shops



Indicators: balloons, empty whippets, disorientated

Risks: accidents when intoxicated; lung damage if used incorrectly, tolerance, vitamin deficiency, anoxia if used from cylinder,