

Re-Solv

Text or whatsapp **Re-Solv** with any questions on **07496 959930** or phone in confidence on **01785 810762** from 10am - 4pm, Mon - Fri. There's more online at re-solv.org.

FRANK

At talktofrank.com you can search for information on every drug and there's a confidential phone helpline on **0300 123 6600**, text **82111** and live chat service.



If you have concerns about your mental health, you can call Mind on **0300 123 3393**, text **86463** or visit mind.org.uk.

THE MIX

The Mix provides free, confidential information and support for under-25s on **0808 808 4994** and at themix.org.uk.

FESTIVAL SAFE

The website festivalsafe.com brings together information for UK festival goers on everything from choosing the right tent to advice on alcohol and other drugs.

Nitrous oxide: The Lowdown



BALLOONS, CHARGERS, CRACKERS, LAUGHING GAS, NOS, WHIPPITS

Nitrous oxide is a gas used medically as an anaesthetic. It's also used in catering as the propellant in whipped cream chargers. Some people use it as a recreational drug, usually inhaled from a balloon, to get high. It acts as a 'depressant' (not unlike alcohol), in that it slows down your body's system and leads to feelings of relaxation or happiness – hence the name 'laughing gas'.

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@resolvUK

info@re-solv.org

Helpline: **01785 810762**

Please let us know if you would like this information in another format.

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IS IT LEGAL?

It's not a crime to possess nitrous oxide for personal use. But 2016 legislation makes it illegal to import, produce, sell or supply psychoactive substances, and this includes nitrous oxide for recreational purposes.

IS IT DANGEROUS?

Deaths from nitrous oxide tend to occur, not from inhaling a single balloon, but from heavy use where the body becomes starved of oxygen leading to suffocation or unconsciousness.

Using nitrous oxide may also be riskier for people who have heart conditions.

Nitrous oxide also inactivates Vitamin B12, a lack of which can cause anaemia and, in cases of prolonged use, 'peripheral neuropathy' or nerve damage.

IS IT HARMFUL?

There is always a risk associated with taking drugs of any kind. This can be due to the drug itself, to the increased risk of accident, or to behaving in ways you wouldn't otherwise choose (e.g. unsafe sex).

So please be as informed as possible, particularly if you have pre-existing health conditions and:-

BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU GET YOUR NITROUS FROM
Make sure you are not being supplied a more dangerous gas like butane.

DON'T INHALE DIRECTLY FROM THE CHARGER

TAKE CARE WHEN DISCHARGING CANISTERS

Don't let them come into contact with your skin – the extreme cold can cause burns.

DON'T USE A MASK OR PUT A PLASTIC BAG OVER YOUR HEAD

DON'T OVERDO IT

If you plan to use more than one balloon, let your body recover in between.

EAT

Particularly if you're vegetarian or anaemic, eat to replenish your levels of B12 – eggs, cheese, marmite etc. are good.

DON'T TAKE DRUGS ON YOUR OWN

Stay with a group of friends and agree that one of you will stay sober in order to keep an eye out for the others.

KEEP TO ONE DRUG

Don't mix different drugs or drink alcohol. The results can be anything from unpredictable to actively dangerous.

PLAN YOUR EVENING

Stay in a safe environment – and know how you're getting home.