

PENTHROX use in Outpatient Gynaecology

Penthrox is a pain-relieving vapour, which can be inhaled through a device called the 'Green Whistle'. It contains a type of anaesthetic medicine called Methoxyflurane but in a much lower dose than is used to put people to sleep by general anaesthetic. Penthrox is intended to reduce the amount of pain experienced rather than stop it completely.

What is Penthrox used for?

Penthrox is licensed for use in trauma pain, for example pulling bones back into place in the A&E department. It is increasingly being used as an 'off license' pain control option when undergoing planned procedures in the outpatient gynaecology setting. We offer Penthrox in outpatient gynaecology for procedures where average to severe pain can be expected. Not all women will require Penthrox in this setting but it is available for women who find the procedure particularly uncomfortable and for those who would otherwise need a general anaesthetic.

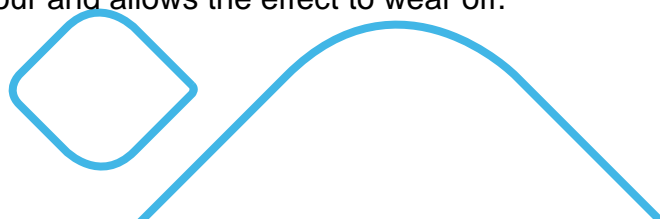


How do I use Penthrox?

Penthrox is self-administered which means you have control of when to use it. There will always be a nurse or a doctor to supervise you using it. Before the start of your procedure, your nurse will show you how to use the device correctly. It is simple to use with the mouthpiece held between your teeth with your lips closed around it.

It usually takes 6-10 breaths before the medicine starts working. Once Penthrox has started working for you, you can breathe it in from time to time when you feel you need more pain relief or continuously if you need to. If you need stronger pain relief, there is a hole at the top of the clear part of the chamber, which can be closed with your finger to get a bigger dose of the painkiller. Pain relief will continue for several minutes after stopping Penthrox.

Penthrox has a fruity taste or smell that you will get used to as you inhale. You may feel a little light-headed or drowsy. If you become drowsy, you will be unable to hold the mouthpiece to your mouth which stops you from breathing the vapour and allows the effect to wear off.



Below is a short video that demonstrates how Pentrox should be used. Your doctor can also show you the video during your consultation.

<https://youtu.be/D2OaGKeFQA8>

After you have completed your procedure, you will be given a green Pentrox paper wrist band which you must wear for 48 hours. Should you need a general anaesthetic in the 48 hours post Pentrox, an anaesthetist would use a different type of anaesthetic.

What are the benefits of Pentrox?

- Strong short-acting pain relief which you self-administer
- You are in control
- It quickly disappears from the body and therefore requires only a short recovery time
- Avoids the risks and recovery time involved with having a general anaesthetic.

What are the possible side effects of Pentrox?

Common side effects

- Headache
- Dizziness & sickness
- Dry mouth
- Drowsiness
- Tingling skin
- Double vision
- Flushing of the skin or skin irritation

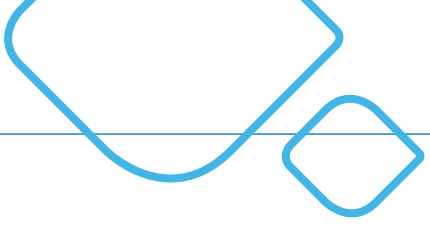
Rare side effects

- Allergic reaction (malignant hyperthermia)
- Liver / kidney damage – this is very unlikely with the low dose used in the outpatient setting.

When should Pentrox be avoided?

Most patients can use Pentrox and your doctor will ensure that it is safe for you. Pentrox should not be used if:

- You are allergic or have had a bad reaction to any anaesthetic given through a mask
- You have a history or family history of malignant hyperthermia. This is a condition where symptoms such as a very high fever, fast, irregular heartbeat, muscle spasms and breathing problems have occurred after being given an anaesthetic. It is a genetic condition that is confirmed by having a muscle biopsy performed at St James's hospital in Leeds.

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- You have serious kidney damage or liver damage
 - You have a change in your level of consciousness for any reason
 - You have recently had alcohol or recreational drugs
 - You have significant heart or circulatory problems
 - You have shallow breathing or difficulty in breathing
 - You have recently taken or are taking certain medications such as strong painkillers

Going home

The effects of Pentrox wear off very quickly and if you feel well, you should be able to go home straight after your procedure. However, sometimes you might need a bit more time to feel back to normal. If this is the case or if you are driving home we ask that you stay in the department for 30 minutes. This will either be in our recovery area or waiting room, refreshments will be available.

Questionnaires

All women attending for outpatient hysteroscopy will be asked to complete a patient experience questionnaire. This is done on the department iPad and is completely anonymous. It is very useful in helping us understand how we can continue to improve our service.

Contacting us

If you have any queries or concerns regarding your appointment don't hesitate to contact us:

Gynaecology outpatients: 01225 824664

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01225 428331 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

If you would like this leaflet in email form, large print, braille or another language, please contact the Patient Support and Complaints team on 01225 825656.

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