Galaxy Gas: Flavored Whipped Cream Charger Or Dangerous Drug?

by Zachary Pottle

What Is Galaxy Gas?

Galaxy Gas is an Atlanta-based brand of nitrous oxide, an odorless, colorless, non-flammable gas also known as "laughing gas" or "whippits," typically associated with recreational <u>drug use</u>.

The effects caused by inhaling nitrous oxide gas, such as lightheadedness and euphoria, can be felt within seconds. This occurs because inhalants disrupt the central nervous system, reducing brain activity by cutting off oxygen supply. The resulting high is brief, often lasting just a few minutes, prompting users to inhale repeatedly in quick succession to maintain the effect.

The product is marketed and sold as "high quality whipped cream chargers and whipped cream dispensers," which are meant to flavor the whipped cream with options like mango smoothie, tropical punch, and blue raspberry.

In most U.S. states, anyone can buy nitrous oxide without the need for a permit or license. However, with the rise in popularity of Galaxy Gas and nitrous oxide as a whole, some states have moved to limit sales to those over the age of 18. Nitrous oxide is typically illegal to possess if used for recreational purposes. The Galaxy Gas website explicitly states, "It is illegal to purposely inhale our product," and includes multiple disclaimers across their website.

Even still, the company has become more known for their product's recreational use rather than its intended culinary use.

Dangers Of Galaxy Gas

Using Galaxy Gas or other nitrous oxide products to get high poses significant health risks, especially health risks for teens who may not fully understand the dangers involved. Whippits can create a brief, euphoric high when inhaled. However, the effects of nitrous oxide are far from harmless. Inhaling this gas can lead to oxygen deprivation, known as hypoxia, which can cause dizziness, fainting, and even loss of consciousness. Prolonged or repeated use can cause damage to the brain and nervous system, impairing memory, concentration, and coordination.

Additionally, using whippits can result in more severe health consequences, such as nerve damage, heart complications, and <u>overdose</u>. The cold gas can cause frostbite on the nose, lips, or throat, and the risk of accidents or injuries is heightened when users are disoriented.

Teens are especially vulnerable to these dangers, as their brains are still developing, making them more susceptible to the harmful effects of nitrous oxide. Moreover, the ease of access to whipped cream canisters at home or in stores contributes to the rising trend, increasing the potential for abuse.

Other side effects of using Galaxy Gas or other whippits may include:

- Dizziness and lightheadedness
- Nausea and vomiting

- Headaches and confusion
- Impaired motor coordination
- Shortness of breath and chest pain
- Numbness or tingling in hands and feet
- Memory loss and difficulty concentrating
- Damage to nerve and brain cells
- Heart irregularities and blood pressure changes
- Frostbite or burns around the nose, lips, or throat

Understanding these risks is crucial to educating teens on the serious consequences of inhalant abuse and preventing long-term harm.

Dangerous Marketing Tactics

While the company states that their product is sold for strictly "culinary" purposes, the brightly colored and enticing flavor options may tell a different story. A quick search on social media platforms like <u>TikTok</u> and <u>Instagram</u> for "galaxy gas" will provide thousands of videos involving the misuse, and promotion of, Galaxy Gas products. Unfortunately, Galaxy Gas has become synonymous with its use as an <u>inhalant</u>.

Marketing tactics that target children are not a new phenomenon, especially in the drug and <u>alcohol</u> industries. Industries dealing in tobacco, alcohol, junk food, and other unhealthy products invest heavily in learning about children and marketing to them from a young age, aiming to keep them as lifelong consumers. Over the years, marketing strategies have evolved from basic methods like offering toys with purchases, using bright colors, and adding flavors to products, to more sophisticated digital approaches, such as gamification, celebrity endorsements, and even the use of Al.

These tactics are not new, and the federal government has intervened in similar situations with companies that sell addictive products, mainly <u>nicotine</u>. Back in 2022, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned the sale of JUUL products (a popular <u>vaping device</u> marketed as a healthier alternative to smoking) following a dramatic rise among <u>teen users</u>. Critics blamed the rise in the popularity of colorful packaging, a variety of flavors, and the use of young models in marketing campaigns.

Galaxy Gas is not exempt from these dangerous marketing approaches. A quick look at the company's website will show a site primed to grab teen's and adolescent's attention. With bright colors, dozens of different flavored gas tanks, and even a store filled with merchandise like t-shirts, bottle openers, rainbow-colored whipped cream dispensers, and even a decorative wall clock, all with the company's flashy galaxy-inspired logo. The company even has a rewards program where shoppers can earn points towards future purchases.

For a product intended solely for "culinary use," Galaxy Gas can seemingly be bought just about anywhere. An internet search for Galaxy Gas will provide dozens of suppliers, like Amazon and

Walmart, both of which offer free delivery with no age verification whatsoever. Viral social media videos have even found that Galaxy Gas is being sold at local smoke and vape shops around the country, with crudely handwritten signs on the product warning customers it's intended for "culinary" use.

Social Media Trends, Lil T Man, And Popular Streamers Using Galaxy Gas

Perhaps the most viral video associated with Galaxy Gas, and likely what kickstarted the sudden explosion of its popularity, is a video of a young teen known as "Lil T Man." Last month, an Atlanta restaurant posted an Instagram Reel in which two teen boys were taste-testing their food. One of the teens was holding a Galaxy Gas canister, and when asked, "What's your name, where you from?" by the owner, the teen inhaled the canister and said, "My name is Lil T, man," with his voice dropping dramatically in tone due to the nitrous gas.

The video, which has garnered millions of views, likes, and shares, has become a viral meme in online spaces like TikTok and Instagram. However, with many people sharing the video for seemingly innocent reasons or to highlight the dangers of whippits, many have sought to find their own Galaxy Gas.

Another viral video, this time shared on TikTok, shows a group of 5 or 6 people in a circle toasting their Galaxy Gas tanks. The video was accompanied by a caption on screen that read "Spent 580 in smoke shop for da members," alluding to the fact that these canisters were not purchased at a retail location like Walmart, but rather at a local smoke or vape shop.

Faze Banks, a popular YouTuber, Twitch streamer, and online personality, recently appeared on fellow Twitch streamer Lacy's broadcast, where he appeared to gift the streamer a large tank of Galaxy Gas. Lacy, who has over 900,000 followers on Twitch, averages roughly 12,000 concurrent viewers, many of which are young males.

What To Do If You Suspect Your Teen Is Abusing Galaxy Gas

If you suspect your teen is abusing Galaxy Gas, it's crucial to take action quickly to prevent further harm. Look for signs such as empty whipped cream canisters, small metal cartridges, or changes in behavior like mood swings, confusion, or impaired coordination. If you notice any of these indicators, start an open and honest conversation with your teen about the dangers of inhalant abuse. Approach the topic with empathy and understanding, creating a safe space for them to share their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment.

While early intervention is key, professional help can provide the guidance and support needed for lasting change. Treatment providers can help put you and your teen in contact with a wide range of resources. These can range from <u>inpatient treatment services</u> to <u>medical detox</u> centers or <u>outpatient rehab facilities</u>.

Don't wait until it's too late. Contact a treatment provider today to get your teen the help they need to lead a healthier, substance-free life.

https://www.addictioncenter.com/community/galaxy-gas/