

LIVING WITH OXYGEN



 *3B™ Medical, Inc.*



My Doctor Prescribed Oxygen, Now What?

Why do I need oxygen?

Oxygen is a gas that makes up part of the air you breathe. Your lungs breathe in oxygen and other gases and exhale carbon dioxide. When you don't have enough oxygen being absorbed by your body, then your muscles and organs, including your brain and heart, aren't getting the "fuel" they need to properly run your body.

When you have a chronic issue such as COPD, the amount of oxygen the lungs transfer to the blood decreases over time. In addition, the amount of carbon dioxide may also increase because it can't be properly exhaled or eliminated in normal ways.

There are many reasons you may have low blood oxygen levels. A low blood oxygen saturation or a chronic lack of oxygen may be noticed by you in different ways. Patients often visit their physician because of several issues that may be related to a lack of oxygen. These include:

- Cyanosis, or a bluish tinge of the lips, fingertips earlobes and other extremities
- Fatigue and muscle fatigue especially upon exertion
- Problems concentrating or with memory
- Heart disease
- Edema or swelling of the lower extremities
- Sleep breathing disorders

With COPD, the amount of oxygen the lungs transfer to the blood stream decreases over time.

Sometimes patients will be diagnosed with a condition that would benefit from supplemental, nocturnal or round the clock oxygen therapy. These conditions include:

- Pneumonia
- Asthma
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Bronchitis
- Emphysema
- CHF (congestive heart failure)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Lung cancer

This is by no means a complete list! Your personal condition may or may not be listed here. Oxygen is used therapeutically for many more conditions, if you have any questions please clarify with your physician. Once your physician is aware of your complaint or health condition you will most likely undergo a pulse oximetry test and possibly an arterial blood gas. Other determining tests may be performed as well.



Pulse oximetry is often a device that clips or gets taped to your finger, toe or ear lobe to estimate your pulse and oxygen saturation or SpO₂. Pulse oximetry is sometimes done overnight and can be performed at home by you, the patient. Pulse Oximetry devices are available over the counter or through your medical device provider.

An arterial blood gas is a blood test that takes a sampling from a blood vessel, usually in your wrist. This test will accurately measure your oxygen or PaO₂ and your carbon dioxide levels or PaCO₂.

Both tests can help determine if you would benefit from supplemental oxygen therapy.





How Will Oxygen Therapy Help?

Oxygen is not stored in the body, it is important to note that therapeutic oxygen is only effective when worn. Follow all physicians' orders to receive the maximum benefit from your supplemental oxygen.

Oxygen therapy is used to increase the amount of oxygen in your blood, to fuel your organs and muscles. Oxygen therapy improves heart function and increases the quality of life for the wearer. Oxygen can reduce fatigue and shortness of breath in some users. Supplemental oxygen can increase tolerance to exertion and can also help you to sleep better.

Oxygen therapy has very few side effects and they are generally mild. Many oxygen patients will have some drying of their nasal passages. More severe side effects present as a breakdown of skin integrity where your nasal cannula sits.

There are quite a few products on the market to combat this including water based skin protectants. Please speak to your health care provider if you are experiencing these issues.

Your Prescription

Please remember, your oxygen setting IS a prescription from your physician. You should never attempt to change your oxygen setting without prior direction from your physician; this could be a dangerous or even life threatening issue. Certain respiratory disorders are made worse with increased oxygen levels. If you have any breathing issues, are short of breath or feel like you can't get enough air, please call 911 or your local emergency services.

- Oxygen is not habit forming or addictive
- Treatment may be less effective if you smoke
- Oxygen is not stored in the body, stopping therapy will result in your oxygen levels dropping
- Oxygen is prescribed in liters per minute or lpm (example 2lpm O₂)
- Oxygen may be prescribed only when sleeping, if that is your prescription, please remember to wear your oxygen even while napping
- Your prescription may be different when resting or when exercising, please ensure you are comfortable changing your lpm according to your physician's directions. Exercise is any exertion that may increase your pulse rate
- If you are prescribed round the clock oxygen therapy. Ensure you are wearing your oxygen as prescribed. Oxygen levels will drop rapidly.
- Some users will feel immediate effects of oxygen use; others will take a little longer. If no relief is felt please consult your physician
- If your condition worsens you may need an adjustment to your prescription.

Remember; your physician and clinical team are here to help you! Make them an integral part of your healthcare.

Oxygen Safety:

The MOST Important Part

Portable oxygen concentrators, like the Aer X are safe when used correctly. However, used incorrectly, any source of oxygen is a potentially dangerous situation.

Oxygen itself does not burn or explode, but it does fuel fire. Therefore extreme precautions must be taken. Fires fueled with supplemental oxygen burn faster and hotter, sparks and materials that wouldn't normally burn can start a fire because of the oxygen you use. Exercise caution to protect yourself, your home and those around you.

Following these simple rules and suggestions will help prevent fires:

- Do not use your Aer X near ANY open flame, no cigarettes, matches, lighters, candles, smoking or cooking, even if cooking on an electric stove
- Keep all non-water based skin products away from your Aer X, do not use petroleum jelly, lotions or ointments that contain oil or grease of any kind in or around your nose. Oxygen can cause burns when used with these products
- Do not use aerosol products while wearing oxygen. This includes air freshener spray, bug repellent, spray paint, cleaning fluids etc.
- Do not use hair dryers, electric razors or any product with a motor that produces heat while wearing oxygen
- Do not place your Aer X near heat sources such as radiators, heaters or stoves
- Do not leave oxygen running when not in use
- Never use your Aer X while it is stored in the trunk of a car
- Always allow plenty of ventilation and air circulation around the air filter inlet
- Do not use bedding or clothing that is made of wool, nylon or synthetic materials, as they may produce static electricity which can start a spark
- Do not allow children or untrained persons to handle or operate your Aer X
- If Aer X is stored in a cold environment, allow to return to room temperature before use

Hang NO SMOKING signs on all room doors where oxygen is in use





Traveling with Portable Oxygen Tips:

Having portable oxygen means you can resume your active life, going shopping, out to dinner even vacations don't have to stop with the newest lighter concentrators. The Aer X is designed to make life possible again.

Travel by Road and Rail:

Traveling by car or RV can be one of the most fun ways of seeing the country, historically traveling with oxygen by car... not so fun. Tanks are bulky and take up a lot of storage space, you have to plan on having enough to last and making plans for oxygen at your destination. Portable concentrators however make car travel a breeze. The Aer X has long lasting batteries that charge even during usage. Plug right in to the 12volt car jack and you are good to go!

Train travel takes a little more preparation but can be just as convenient. Most train companies (such as Amtrak) are very welcoming to oxygen passengers, however you must call for reservations as the option for supplemental oxygen passengers isn't available to book online. It's smart to carry your doctor's note or oxygen prescription with you and when you book travel make sure they know you will need an outlet for your POC unit.

Flying the Friendly Skies:

Flying with oxygen is fast but can get a little complicated. Every airline has its own rules and regulations for flying with oxygen. Every POC must have FAA clearance to be allowed on an airplane with more than 19 seats, however it is your legal right to fly with a POC.

When calling with a booking request please remember to state if you need an outlet. However check online to see flying with portable oxygen rules for that particular airline. Some want you to be seated in an aisle seat, others a window seat. All airlines have a requirement for extra batteries so that you don't run out in flight or during a delay. In addition most airlines will allow you to rent oxygen, but it generally comes with a hefty fee.

Regardless of how you travel, make sure you carry a portable pulse oximeter and check your O2 saturation often!

Sailing the Open Sea:

Cruising can be one of the best oxygen travel experiences. Cruise ships are basically floating cities and there is very little to stop supplemental oxygen patients from enjoying the cruise. Ensure that the cruise company is aware of your oxygen needs at least 30 days ahead of time, go online and look at the cruises website under "Special Needs or Medical Needs" and that you have your doctors permission to travel. Ensure that you always have enough battery charge in your Aer X to be able to explore the ship and any offshore excursions.

Ships tend to have electric outlets in many unexpected places such as dining rooms. Anytime you can plug in, do so to ensure your batteries stay charged.

Offshore excursions are great fun, but remember, even those marked as "EASY" may be to challenging for an oxygen patient.



Cruising
can be one
of the best
oxygen travel
experiences.



