

Department of Respiratory Medicine
Oxygen Assessment Service
Suite 2, 2nd floor Lowe House
Crab Street
St Helens
WA10 2DJ

Telephone: 0151 430 1553

Oxygen Information Leaflet

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Important advice

Oxygen is a drug that has to be prescribed by a doctor, a Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) nurse or a respiratory nurse specialist.

Why have you been prescribed home oxygen?

Home oxygen is used to prolong life and should only be used when your blood oxygen level has been found to be low.

How do we decide whether you need oxygen?

A sample of blood will have been taken to check your blood oxygen levels. This is done when you are well with no infections. We can then decide if you need oxygen prescribing.

You may also require a walking test.

For further information

If you require any further information or advice regarding your oxygen, please contact your oxygen service, GP, COPD nurse or respiratory nurse;

The oxygen service can be contacted on:

0151 430 1553, 9am–5 pm, Monday – Friday

(if you are known to St Helens Community COPD service, Department of Respiratory Medicine, Oxygen Assessment Service 8.30am – 7pm, 7 days a week), they will be able to discuss your enquiry and help with any problems.

Further advice may be obtained from:

Asthma + Lung UK helpline on:

- call on 0300 222 5800 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) Calls are charged at local rate
- Website: Helpline | Asthma + Lung UK (asthmaandlung.org.uk)
- Email: helpline@asthmaandlung.org.uk

Alternatively, you can write to them at:

Supporter Care Team
Asthma + Lung UK
The White Chapel Building
10 Whitechapel High Street
London, E1 8QS

Your current oxygen prescription is:

LTOT

SBOT

AOT

Date

Additional information

What equipment is used to provide oxygen?



Concentrator



Portable oxygen cylinder

You may be prescribed either a face mask or nasal cannula to receive oxygen.



Nasal cannula



Face mask

Home oxygen is prescribed in the form of:

- Long Term Oxygen Therapy (LTOT)
- Short Burst Oxygen Therapy (SBOT)
- Ambulatory Oxygen Therapy (AOT)



www.asthmaandlung.org.uk

1. Oxygen is safe to use if used correctly as prescribed.
2. Oxygen must never be shared or given to someone else.
3. If you are experiencing any problems, contact the COPD nurse, respiratory nurse specialist, your GP or consultant.
4. You will be reviewed again at the oxygen clinic at a later date to reassess your oxygen requirements, as these may change from time to time.

Warning

- Oxygen is not flammable but can act as an accelerant for a fire i.e. it would help it to burn much better.
- Smoking is not permitted around the oxygen; if patients are found to be smoking, oxygen may be removed for the safety of the patient and the general public.
- Oxygen must never be used around a naked flame such as cooking or gas fires.
- If you or any of your family smoke, a risk assessment will be completed and the fire service will be informed.
- They may visit your home to install smoke detectors.
- Consent for this will be gained when you are prescribed the oxygen.
- Electronic cigarettes (**E cigarettes**) must be treated with the same caution as standard cigarettes and must never be used with oxygen therapy in place or near oxygen equipment.
- Electronic cigarettes have a heating element and therefore generate a heat source, which means they have the potential to ignite causing fatal fires. E cigarettes and the charging equipment should therefore not be used whilst using your oxygen or in the vicinity of the oxygen equipment.
- As oxygen can possibly irritate the nasal passages, we advise that you should regularly moisten them with a water based product such as KY Jelly as petroleum based products eg Vaseline cannot be used. If you continue to experience irritation please contact your COPD nurse, respiratory nurse or GP for further advice. If you have repeated nose bleeds, you should contact your COPD nurse, respiratory nurse or GP as a matter of urgency, so they can advise you further.



Long Term Oxygen Therapy (LTOT)

LTOT may be given if your oxygen levels are low in the following conditions:

1. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
2. Severe chronic asthma
3. Interstitial lung disease (lung fibrosis)
4. Bronchiectasis
5. Lung cancer
6. Chronic heart failure
7. Pulmonary vascular disease.

LTOT will normally be prescribed for a minimum of 15 hours a day, based on the result of the blood test you have had. We advise on a set amount of oxygen for you to receive. This matches the number that is set on the oxygen delivery device. This number is called the flow rate (volume of oxygen in litres).

This should never be altered by anyone other than your nurse, specialist or doctor. If the flow rate needs to be changed, a trained engineer will visit your home to do this with instructions of the new flow rate. This is known as your prescription.

LTOT is usually administered through a device called a concentrator.

Short Burst Oxygen Therapy (SBOT)

SBOT is oxygen that has been prescribed to help relieve symptoms of breathlessness following activity.

Rest following activity will also relieve breathlessness; however, oxygen will help to improve your symptoms quicker than rest alone.

This type of oxygen is generally used for no more than 5 - 10 minutes at a time. This may be given on a temporary basis eg when discharged from hospital and while you wait for a LTOT assessment in clinic.

You will usually be given oxygen cylinders in these circumstances.

Occasionally this may be given via a concentrator.

Ambulatory Oxygen Therapy (AOT)

AOT is prescribed after an assessment of your oxygen levels whilst walking.

If your oxygen levels are low when walking, oxygen may improve your symptoms of breathlessness. This will help you in keeping active and mobile.

Ambulatory Oxygen can be prescribed and delivered in many different ways and will be discussed at your oxygen appointment.

Side effects of oxygen

Oxygen is very useful in people with low oxygen levels to reduce symptoms of breathlessness and prolong life. However, some patients are very sensitive to oxygen and can develop potentially serious side effects. These include:

1. Headaches
2. Drowsiness
3. Confusion
4. Tremors (shaking)

If you experience any of these side effects you must contact your COPD nurse, respiratory nurse specialist or GP immediately, as these symptoms may indicate you are getting too much oxygen.

Other less serious side effects include a dry nose and mouth. You can use a lubricating water based gel, which can be obtained from your local pharmacy. Do not use Vaseline or any other oil based lubricants as they can be flammable.

If your nose becomes too dry you may experience nose bleeds (epistaxis). If this happens please follow the advice below:

- Remove your nasal cannula or mask and pinch the soft part of your nose just above your nostrils for 5 minutes.
- If the bleeding has not stopped repeat for another 10 minutes. Ensure you are sitting upright and breathing through your mouth.
- If the bleeding continues after 30 mins, attend Accident and Emergency or a Walk in Centre.

If you have repeated incidents of epistaxis, you must report this to your GP. As they may need to refer you to the Ear, Nose and Throat team.