

Oxygen: Your Questions Answered

What is oxygen therapy?

Oxygen therapy provides **supplemental (additional) oxygen**. It is prescribed to people with lung disease or heart disease and low oxygen levels on room air. When your baseline oxygen levels are low, not enough oxygen is delivered to your cells, causing symptoms and damage to your organs over time. **Oxygen therapy helps you breathe better and live more actively.**

Who needs oxygen therapy?

Patients with lung or heart disease and low oxygen levels on room air. Your healthcare provider will determine if you require oxygen and the proper amount.

What are the possible signs of low oxygen levels?

- Shortness of breath with minor activity
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Rapid or fast breathing
- Lips or extremities blue in color
- Fast heart rate with little activity
- Extreme Fatigue
- Confusion

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What are some common types of oxygen?

The type of oxygen that is right for you is based on your oxygen needs, lifestyle, and insurance coverage.

- **Home Oxygen Concentrator:** takes in normal air and removes other gases to deliver oxygen to you. It typically operates on electricity and requires a power source. You will need a backup source of oxygen in case the power goes out.
- **Portable Oxygen Concentrator:** designed to be lightweight and compact, making it easier for individuals to carry. You can plug some concentrators into your car, or they may run on batteries. They do not require constant filling.
- **Liquid Oxygen Tank:** the liquid form of oxygen that is extremely cold and highly concentrated and converts to a gas before you breathe it in.
- **Compressed Oxygen Gas Tank:** oxygen is stored within a metal tank or cylinder. The size of the tank determines how much oxygen is in it.

How long will I have to use oxygen therapy at home?

Some people with an acute condition such as pneumonia may only be prescribed oxygen for a limited period. Others with chronic conditions may require long-term oxygen therapy. Discuss your specific medical condition with your healthcare provider.

Is there anything I should avoid while wearing oxygen?

- Smoking
- Fires
- Cooking with Gas
- Flammable creams and lotions, such as petroleum jelly, oil-based lotion, and vapor rubs
- Aerosols such as hair spray and air fresheners