

Being discharged from hospital with oxygen treatment

Respiratory

This leaflet has been produced for patients with conditions that cause low oxygen levels in their blood. The aim of this leaflet is to help you understand why oxygen was used during your recent hospital stay but also why it is being prescribed for you to use at home after being discharged.

What is oxygen treatment?

Oxygen is needed to enable the organs of the body to work efficiently. Sometimes the lungs cannot get enough oxygen into the blood and this can put a strain on the heart and blood vessels.

Why did I have oxygen whilst in hospital?

You were given oxygen because the level of oxygen in your blood was low. The medical term for this is hypoxaemia.

Oxygen is not given to treat breathlessness but to treat hypoxaemia (low oxygen levels), patients can be breathless but still have normal levels of oxygen in their blood.

Will my oxygen levels return to normal?

In most cases - yes, oxygen levels will return to normal and oxygen treatment can be removed. This may take a number of weeks or even months. Gradually your activity levels will return to normal. In some patients it is sometimes necessary to continue with oxygen treatment.

Why have I been given oxygen to use at home?

If the level of oxygen in your blood remains low then oxygen therapy will need to be continued. Normally up to six weeks after being discharged from hospital your need for oxygen will be checked by the hospital's home oxygen team which is sometimes referred to as the Home Oxygen Service for Assessment and Review or HOS-AR for short.

The HOS-AR team are based at the hospital within the Respiratory Centre.

Why is it important to have an outpatient appointment with the hospital oxygen team?

It is important that you attend the oxygen clinic to make sure you are receiving oxygen correctly. The appointment will take around 30 – 60 minutes to complete.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

If you have a chest infection at the time of your appointment then we may not be able to undertake the assessment. It is also important not to delay taking any of your antibiotics. Please contact the HOS-AR team if you have a chest infection at the time of your appointment to discuss further.

Attending all of your appointments regarding your oxygen treatment is important

What will happen during the appointment?

A blood test will be taken either from the earlobe or from the wrist. This will allow the team to assess the level of oxygen in your blood. If the blood test shows that your oxygen levels have returned to normal then oxygen treatment will no longer provide you with any additional benefit and should be removed.

If the blood test shows the oxygen level has not recovered then you will need to continue to use oxygen at home. The HOS-AR team will provide you with information and education about using oxygen, they may also change the oxygen equipment you were originally given. In order to improve oxygen levels and reduce the strain on your heart and lungs it may be necessary to use oxygen for more than 16 hours per day (this includes the hours in bed, overnight). Most patients can have periods of time off their oxygen therapy during the day. This type of oxygen therapy is called Long Term Oxygen Therapy or LTOT for short.

Remember that oxygen is given to treat low oxygen levels and prevent further health complications, it is not used to relieve the sensation of breathlessness.

Can I have portable oxygen?

A formal oxygen assessment is required before a decision regarding portable oxygen can be made. This can be discussed with you at your appointment.

Is more oxygen better for me?

No. Oxygen is a prescribed drug and should be treated in the same way tablets and medicines are prescribed. In some cases taking too much oxygen can be harmful.

Do I need to take any special care when using oxygen?

Yes, oxygen is highly flammable so it should not be used near any naked flames or heat sources. No-one should smoke anywhere near to the oxygen source even if it is not being used.

To ensure that you are safe to use oxygen at home a risk assessment will be completed. The risk assessment asks a number of questions regarding how safe it is for you to have oxygen at home. Typically questions related to smoking, smoke alarms at your property, safe storage of oxygen and if you have recently had a fall etc.

Contact details

If you have any questions about your oxygen treatment or your appointment in the Oxygen clinic after being discharged, please contact the Home Oxygen Service at New Cross Hospital, Wolverhampton on 01902 695061 (9.00am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday).

If you have not received an oxygen assessment appointment within two weeks of leaving hospital then please contact the ward you were on to check that a referral was made by your doctor. Telephone the hospital on 01902 307999 and ask to be put through to the ward you were on.

Further information

More information about oxygen at home can be found at

NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/conditions/home-oxygen

The British Lung Foundation www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/oxygen

My oxygen prescription

Surname	Unit No
Forename	NHS No
Address	DOB
Postcode	(or affix patient label)

Home oxygen prescription at discharge: to be completed by discharging clinician or HOS-AR team only

Flow _____ Litres / min

To be used for _____ hours per day via O₂ concentrator

Referral for a formal oxygen assessment with HOS-AR team completed? Yes / No

Have you completed a formal referral for an oxygen assessment? This can be made via the request a test app on clinical web portal

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。