

Additional Notes

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Health and safety advice for patients on home oxygen



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Dorset Adult Integrated Respiratory Service (DAIRS)
Department of Thoracic Medicine
Royal Bournemouth **0300 019 6122**
Poole **0300 019 8483**

Service hours: 8am-4pm, Monday to Friday

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You have received this leaflet because you have just been prescribed oxygen to use at home. You will receive an appointment to be followed up by DAIRS approximately four to six weeks after you have received your oxygen equipment. If you have any queries before this time, please contact us on the telephone number for the hospital who prescribed your oxygen.

DO keep at least 10 feet (3metres) away from sparking objects, naked sources of flame, flammable materials and extreme heat.

If you are unable to do this please turn off your oxygen and wait 30 minutes for the oxygen to evaporate from clothing; failing to do this is a fire risk.

DO ensure you turn off your oxygen supply when not in use, even for short durations.

Leaving oxygen equipment switched on and unattended while not in use is also a fire risk.

DO allow at least 30 minutes after you have removed your oxygen before cooking.

Oxygen may build up in clothing and materials and make it more flammable, so allow time for it to be dispersed.

Helpful numbers:

Air Liquide:

0808 202 2229

Air Liquide Rebate Team:

0800 781 9939

Fire Service - Safe and Well Check:

0800 038 2323

DO NOT let your tubing get trapped as this can reduce the flow of oxygen or even stop it. The maximum length of tubing that can be installed is 15m so always take care not to slip or trip up over your tubing. Be extra careful around doors and furniture.

DO NOT let anyone tamper with your oxygen equipment or change the flow rate ordered by the Dorset Adult Integrated Respiratory Service (DAIRS) team.

Safe transportation of oxygen

When transporting a cylinder ensure it is secured preferably in the boot of the car - it can act as a missile in an accident.

NO smoking including or vaping by anyone in the car with you.

If in use within the vehicle it is recommended that a window is kept open to stop a build-up of oxygen in the vehicle.

DO NOT use equipment when refuelling vehicle.

It is recommended you inform your vehicle and home insurance company.

Looking after your equipment - also known as consumables

The cannula/mask and tubing supplied are all important parts of your oxygen equipment and need looking after.

Cannula

Clean daily with a disinfectant wipe or with a warm soapy cloth. Never immerse your cannula in water; simply wipe it as described.

The cannula should be replaced monthly or as advised by your healthcare professional.

Facemasks

Facemasks should be cleaned daily in warm soapy water, rinsed and left to air dry before use.

Facemasks should last 2-3 months if cleaned daily.

Do not buy any nasal cannula or oxygen facemasks from the internet as we cannot guarantee these are medical grade and may not deliver the same flow rate you have been prescribed.

Emergency

Remember in the case of fire, immediately vacate the premises. Only take your oxygen equipment with you if it does not hinder you. Stay out of the premises.

Call the fire and rescue services and advise them you are using medical oxygen.

If you are unwell

If you feel more unwell such as coughing up sputum or have a temperature, you are not able to carry out your normal daily activities or are using your blue inhaler more this could be a chest infection or if you are feeling sleepy or headaches; this could be a sign you are having too much oxygen which can make some people very poorly. **In this case please call your GP, 111, or DAIRS for advice.**

If you feel your symptoms are life threatening, please call 999 and request an ambulance.

DO ensure oxygen is used in a well-ventilated room and not in a confined area.

DO ensure the firebreak remains in the tubing, as left by the installing oxygen technician (this applies to concentrator machines only).

A firebreak is a piece of white plastic with a blue arrow pointing towards the patient. It helps stop a fire spreading up the tubing if one end catches alight.

DO NOT smoke or vape let anyone else smoke or vape near you when you are using your oxygen or near your oxygen concentrator, cylinder, tubing, equipment as it is extremely dangerous. Smoking also aggravates your condition.

Failing to do this is a fire risk.

DO NOT apply oil or grease to the equipment. Nasal cannula/masks should be cleaned using a damp cloth once a day before using. Ensure your hands are clean when handling your oxygen equipment. Change nasal cannula/mask every month. If any water gets into the tubing it must be thrown away (as this could cause an infection in the lung) and you should start using new tubing.

DO NOT use any creams which contain alcohol/liquid paraffin. Only use water based creams. If unsure seek advice from you pharmacist.
