

Community respiratory service. Ambulatory oxygen therapy.

You have recently been seen by a specialist who has advised you to use ambulatory oxygen.

Why do I need Ambulatory Oxygen Therapy?

Ambulatory oxygen is only for patients who have low oxygen levels when they exert themselves or do some physical activity.

You have had a walking test that showed your oxygen levels decrease when you walk or do physical activity. Your oxygen levels decrease because your lungs find it difficult to get enough oxygen into your blood stream when you exert yourself. The tests have shown that if you have oxygen while you walk, you can walk further and you feel less short of breath.

Oxygen can help your symptoms by:

- Reducing the feelings of breathlessness
- Improving the amount of exercise or activity you can do
- Improving quality of life by allowing you to do more, helping you feel more comfortable



When should I use my ambulatory oxygen?

You should use your oxygen when you are doing something that makes you short of breath, such as walking, gardening, and housework. By using the oxygen in this way you will be able to do the task for longer and feel less short of breath.

It is important that you also use the oxygen during exercise as well. This would have been explained to you by the member of the team that assessed your need for oxygen therapy.

At what rate and for how long should I use my oxygen for?

You should use your oxygen at: _____ litres/min

Your estimated usage has been calculated at:
_____ hours per day

The company that supplies your home oxygen will show you how to set the flow rate. If the oxygen company tells you that you are using too much oxygen then please contact us to arrange a re-assessment.

It is important that you do not change the flow rate of your oxygen. Increasing your oxygen flow rate without a proper assessment can be dangerous. If you feel that you need a higher flow rate or need more oxygen then we can arrange for you to be reassessed. Oxygen is a drug and should be treated like any other medicine you normally take.

How will my oxygen be supplied?

The oxygen may be provided from an oxygen cylinder or another delivery system; however the company that supplies your home oxygen will show you how to use the equipment that you require. The specialist who performed the assessment may have asked for you to be supplied with a conserving device. An oxygen conserving device works by 'turning on' the flow when the user is inhaling and 'turning it off' when the user is exhaling. As a result, a substantial amount of oxygen is saved, which dramatically increases the length of time a cylinder of oxygen will last.

The conserving device requires a specific pressure, therefore the flow rate set on the cylinder does not relate to your prescribed flow.

Please note that oxygen conserving devices are not suitable for all patients. This will have been discussed with you during your assessment.

The specialist that performed your assessment and advised you to have home oxygen therapy will contact the oxygen supplier to order your oxygen. The oxygen supplier will telephone you to arrange delivery of your oxygen. If you have not heard from them within one week then please contact the Community Respiratory Service. The home oxygen supplier will arrange the delivery of your oxygen direct with you. On their first visit they will show you how to use the equipment and will show you how to store it safely. They also give you their contact details. If you have any questions or problems with using the equipment they provide to you, you can contact them directly or contact us. If there is a fault with your equipment then please contact the home oxygen supplier.

What follow up will I receive?

The Community Respiratory Service will see you at home within 4 weeks. This visit is to ensure you are using your equipment correctly and safely and that you are getting the most benefit from it. We can also answer any questions you may have.

We will also see you in 3 months. This is to make sure you are using your ambulatory oxygen correctly, and to answer any questions you may have.

We will then see you yearly after that unless you need to see us before then.

You will continue to be seen by the Community Respiratory Service. If you are unsure of your appointment, or if you have any questions or comments then please contact us.

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