


Community Respiratory Service. General Oxygen Safety Information.

Do not Smoke whilst using your Home Oxygen Therapy

- Oxygen is flammable. For safety, never smoke or allow anyone else to smoke near you or your oxygen equipment 
- Always keep your oxygen equipment away from things that may cause a spark or a fire. Never use your oxygen near a gas stove. If there is a powercut use a torch – do not use a candle near oxygen

Important points to remember:

- The flow rate (how many litres of oxygen flows out in one minute) is prescribed by the Community Respiratory Service team. You must never change the flow rate unless the Community Respiratory Service team change the prescription
- If you use nasal cannula, try to breathe through your nose. Blow your nose regularly to prevent build up of secretions
- If your nose gets sore and dry use a water based lubricant like KY Jelly. **Never use petroleum-based products like Vaseline as they are potentially flammable in the presence of oxygen**
- If your ears get sore, you can ask your oxygen company for some foam ear protectors
- Take care of your equipment following the manufacturer's/oxygen company guidelines

Electronic Cigarettes

Before choosing to use e-cigarettes: Currently, e-cigarettes are not generally recommended by NHS stop-smoking services due to the lack of research available about their safety and action. NICE Guidance has just been published



on this. If you are considering the use e-cigarettes please check with your local stop smoking service.

The use of electronic cigarettes may pose a risk to your safety when used with oxygen. As well as being electronic, these devices produce vapours which may contain oil based chemicals and these may increase the risk of combustion.

If you are using electronic cigarettes you should follow the same safety principles adopted when smoking burning cigarettes.

- Do NOT smoke when using oxygen therapy
- Do NOT smoke in the same room as oxygen equipment
- Oxygen supply should be turned off and removed for at least 15 minutes before smoking

If you are using electronic cigarettes to aid stopping smoking you may wish to contact your local NHS stop smoking service who can offer help and advice.

Call Smokefree: 0800 022 4332 or visit www.smokefree.nhs.uk to find you local NHS stop smoking service.

Oxygen Enrichment



Materials which become enriched with oxygen will burn vigorously if ignited.

Only use and store your medical oxygen in a well ventilated area. Keep internal doors open whilst your oxygen cylinder is in use.

- Never place your oxygen equipment near curtains or cover them with clothing or other material objects as this will restrict air circulation
- Never leave your cannula or mask on the bed or in the chair whilst the oxygen is being supplied
- Ensure that when you are not using your oxygen that the supply system is turned off
- Never use or carry the portable vessel under any clothing

Oils and Grease



Oils, grease and materials contaminated with these substances are particularly hazardous in the presence of an oxygen enriched atmosphere, as they can ignite extremely easily and burn very violently.

- Ensure that your hands are clean and do not use oil based creams and moisturisers when using your medical oxygen system. This includes the use of oil based lip moisturisers and make up
- If using alcohol gel ensure that it is massaged in well particularly between the webbing of fingers and allow time for evaporation to take place before handling oxygen equipment
- Do not use oils and grease with your oxygen equipment
- Use water based products such as RoEezit* or KY Jelly

Other Hazards

Do not use aerosol sprays such as hair sprays or deodorants whilst using your oxygen equipment.

If in doubt please contact your oxygen provider.

*RoEezit may need to be specially ordered from a pharmacy

Fire



In the event of a fire:

- As soon as a fire is discovered, ring 999 immediately as long as it is safe to do so
- Advise the operator if there are any compressed gas cylinders on the premises
- Evacuate the area
- As soon as practical, ring your oxygen supplier and advise which items have been involved in the fire
- Do not use any oxygen equipment that has been involved in the fire
- Ring your Community Respiratory Service and inform them of the fire

You can take additional advice from your local fire safety officer.

We strongly recommend that all properties have an operational smoke alarm.

Holiday Oxygen

We understand that it is very important for patients to lead as normal a life as possible. This may involve going on holiday in the UK or abroad. You can organise holiday oxygen by contacting your oxygen supplier. Going on holiday with oxygen involves more detailed planning. Please contact them about one month prior to travelling if it is within the UK. If you are planning to travel abroad or to fly, contact us for help and advice prior to booking your holiday. If you have any questions about travelling with oxygen, then do contact your local community oxygen service.

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