

Oxygen Safety

Oxygen is a medicine ordered by your doctor. Oxygen is safe when used properly. Oxygen does not burn or explode, but it will cause a fire to burn faster. Unsafe practices when using oxygen puts you, your family and caregivers, your neighbors, and other nearby buildings at risk for fire and serious harm or death.

To reduce the risk of fire or other injury, use caution when using home oxygen:

- Never smoke (including e-cigarettes) when using your oxygen. Do not allow smoking in the home, even when the oxygen is turned off.
- Place an “Oxygen in Use- No Smoking or Open Flames” sign on the door leading into your home.
- Keep flames, sparks, and materials that can easily catch fire away from oxygen equipment.
- Never allow an open flame such as a burning candle or lit fireplace in the same room.
- Gas stovetop or oven should not be used while wearing oxygen.
- Keep gas and electric equipment at least 10 feet away from the oxygen source.
- Space heaters in the home should never be near oxygen or any flammable materials such as papers or blankets.
- Never place your oxygen equipment near curtains or cover them with clothing or other objects. This will limit air movement and increase the oxygen concentration.
- Avoid using oil, grease, petroleum, or aerosols on or around your oxygen equipment or tubing.
- Use water-based lubricants such as Surgilube to moisten your lips or nostrils. You may also use saline nasal spray for nasal dryness. Do not use oil-based products such as petroleum jelly (Vaseline).
- Turn off your oxygen when you are not using it.
- Set flow rate for only the number of liters ordered by your doctor.
- Always be aware of the amount of oxygen left in your tank.
- Arrange equipment to avoid tripping, especially at night.
- Keep children and pets away from oxygen equipment and tubing.
- Use the shortest oxygen tubing possible. This helps reduce the risk of tripping; the tubes becoming unattached; and the system not working.
- Keep oxygen tubing clear and straight so the oxygen can flow properly.
- Make sure that the oxygen equipment alarm can be heard from everywhere in your home.
- Register with your local electric company if you have electrically powered equipment such as oxygen, Bi-PAP, or mechanical ventilator.
- Notify your local fire department that you have home oxygen.
- Keep the name and phone number of your oxygen provider easily available. Call them for any equipment problems or for replacement equipment as soon as you notice the need.
- Make sure there are working smoke alarms in your home.
- Have a fire evacuation plan.
- Keep a back-up supply of oxygen readily available and easy to reach. Know how to set up and use it.



Oxygen Safety

Safe oxygen storage

- It is best to store oxygen tanks in an upright position, with sides supported, in a dry location.
- Secure tanks in crate, cart, or rack so they cannot be knocked over or fall.
- If compressed gas cylinders cannot be safely stored upright, lay them down to prevent them from falling over.
- Be sure to secure them so they cannot roll.
- Liquid oxygen units must always be stored upright.
- Store oxygen tanks in a well-ventilated area away from sources of fire, heat, or items that can make a spark. Keep open space around the tanks. Never store the tanks in enclosed places such as under beds, behind the bed, in closets, in car trunks, or in a garage.
- Never store oxygen tanks near heat or extreme cold, or in direct sunlight.
- Keep oxygen tanks at least 10 feet from: Gas or electric cook top or oven, gas furnace, water heater, kerosene heater, electric space heater, paint thinner, gasoline or kerosene, any source of open flame/ spark such as a lighter, electric hair dryer, electric razor, or open flame.
- When moving a tank of oxygen in the car, have it in its carrier lying down, or secure it with a seat belt. Traveling with loose tanks in a car or truck is dangerous.
- Always open a car or truck window when traveling with oxygen.
- Keep the amount of oxygen you carry in the car to a minimum. Avoid transporting large tanks of oxygen in your car.
- Open the tank valve by hand and turn it slowly. Do not use a wrench or other tool to loosen or tighten the cylinder valve.

Oxygen concentrator

- Plug the concentrator into a grounded electrical outlet. Nothing else should be used in the same outlet. Do not use an extension cord.
- Always keep at least 6 inches of open space around the concentrator.
- Do not restrict the airflow around the concentrator.
- Concentrators should not be kept in a closet, behind drapes, behind the bed, in a garage or near a source of heat or extreme cold.
- Do not use the concentrator as a table or place items on top of it.
- Keep the concentrator at least 10 feet away from any open flames.
- Clean your equipment as instructed by your equipment provider, nurse, or therapist.
- Have backup oxygen tanks available and know how attach and use them.
- If an electric power failure happens, unplug the concentrator to avoid an electric spark when power is restored and switch to a portable tank.

Name & Number of Oxygen Company _____

- Call this number for new supplies or concerns about your equipment



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