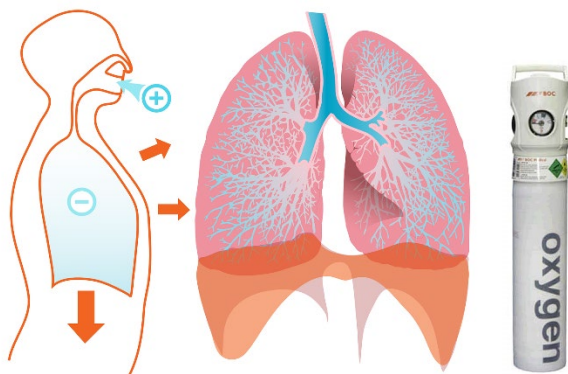








Home oxygen therapy

This leaflet shows you how to do oxygen therapy at home and what equipment you will need. It will also explain what side effects you may feel and how to stay safe while using oxygen at home.




	<p>Your body needs oxygen to work well.</p> <p>Your heart and lungs need oxygen to work.</p> <p>Oxygen is in the air around us but can be stored in a cylinder.</p>
	<p>Oxygen can be used as a treatment for patients with low oxygen levels.</p>
	<p>Some patients use a mask to help them breathe in the oxygen, and find this more comfortable.</p> <p>Other patients use a nasal cannula (tubes up the nose). This is sometimes easier, as it doesn't cover your mouth.</p>



	<p>This is a machine called an oxygen concentrator.</p> <p>It uses electricity to work and filters oxygen from the air around you.</p>
	<p>You will also have a cylinder of oxygen as a back-up, in case there is a power cut.</p>

What are the side effects of using oxygen?

	<p>Oxygen may give you headaches.</p> <p>If this happens, please call us as we may need to change the settings on your equipment for you, as it may be too high.</p>
	<p>Oxygen may make your mouth or nose dry.</p> <p>You can use KY Jelly to moisturise your skin. You can buy this at your local pharmacy.</p> <p>Please don't use Vaseline.</p>

Staying safe

	<p>Make sure you have a smoke alarm fitted at home, and that it works – test it regularly.</p>
	<p>Always keep oxygen cylinders upright, especially in the car.</p>
	<p>Don't smoke or vape when you are using oxygen.</p> <p>Don't let people around you smoke.</p> <p>Oxygen is flammable, which means it can catch fire easily.</p>
	<p>Don't leave your oxygen running when you are not using it.</p> <p>Do not leave oxygen lying around – make sure it is packed away when you are not using it.</p>

	<p>Don't use products, such as cleaning fluids, deodorant spray or hairspray when you are using the oxygen as they can catch fire easily.</p> <p>This could cause a fire in your home, and put you in danger.</p>
	<p>Do not use your oxygen therapy when you are near gas fires, cookers or anything with a naked flame.</p> <p>Oxygen should not be used within 3 metres (10 feet) of these devices.</p>

Your oxygen equipment

- ☐ Concentrator to be used while you are resting.
- ☐ Cylinders to be used while you are up and moving.
- ☐ Concentrator to be used while you are resting AND cylinders to be used while you are up and moving.

How often to use home oxygen therapy

- ☐ **At least** 16 hours in a 24 hour day.
- ☐ While you are up and moving only.

Your oxygen will be given via:

- ☐ Face mask _____%
- ☐ Nasal cannula (tubes up the nose)

Important contacts:

- Royal Berkshire Hospital nurses: 0118 322 7159
- Vivisol (24 hour helpline): 0800 917 9840
- Berkshire West Community Team: 0118 904 6555
- East Berks AIR Team: 0300 614 6459
- South Oxfordshire Community Respiratory Team: 01865 904215

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Department of Respiratory Medicine, June 2025

Next review due: June 2027