



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Discharging Home with Oxygen (Scarborough Hospital)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

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This leaflet is for patients discharged with oxygen from Scarborough Hospital only

Introduction

Whilst you have been in hospital your blood oxygen levels have been low. This usually improves within a few weeks of discharge from hospital. While your oxygen levels are improving, you have been sent home with a **temporary (interim) supply of oxygen.**

You will be referred to your local home oxygen team (usually based in the community) who will contact you to arrange a review and assess if oxygen is still required – this may not happen for up to eight weeks. This leaflet explains how the oxygen works, how to use it safely, and what happens next.

Why have I been given oxygen therapy by the hospital?

Oxygen therapy increases the amount of oxygen in your lungs and bloodstream. If you have low blood oxygen levels following an infection it may take some time for your blood oxygen levels to return to normal.

For some people with chronic lung disease oxygen is very appropriate; for others it is not so useful and can even be harmful. Oxygen therapy helps to take the strain off your heart when it has had to work particularly hard. Oxygen therapy is a treatment for persistent low blood oxygen levels, not breathlessness.

Using oxygen therapy

When it is delivered to your home, a member of staff from the oxygen supplier will demonstrate how to use the equipment to the person who takes delivery of the oxygen – this is not usually the patient as the oxygen equipment gets delivered before the patient returns home.

Your Oxygen Therapy

Your oxygen flow rate is:

.....

Do NOT increase the flow rate unless advised to do so by a Health Professional.

You need to wear a mask OR nasal cannula

If **using nasal cannula (tubes)**, check daily to make sure the tips are not blocked. If needed, wipe tips with a damp cloth to clean them.

If your oxygen is delivered using **a mask**, this also needs to be cleaned daily with a damp cloth.

If your nose becomes sore, use water-based lubricants such as KY Jelly or aqua gel. **Do not use Vaseline or petroleum jelly** as this is a fire risk and hardens the prongs on the nasal cannula.

How to use oxygen safely

- You **must not smoke** whilst having oxygen therapy. Smoking around oxygen is a serious fire hazard. It also reduces the benefits of the oxygen therapy.
- It is important that nobody else smokes in the room whilst you are receiving oxygen.
- Stay at least three metres (approximately ten feet) away from any gas appliance, lit fireplaces or open flames, including candles.
- Do not use oxygen in the same room as paraffin or Calor gas heaters.
- Do not use flammable products such as aerosol sprays, oil-based lubricants, grease, petroleum-based products, or paint thinners near the oxygen supply or when using oxygen.
- Your central heating does not present a problem; continue to use it as you would normally.
- Warn visitors of the dangers of tripping over tubing and take care not to trip yourself.
- Make sure tubing does not become kinked.
- Make sure you have smoke alarms at home and test them regularly. If you don't have smoke alarms then these should be fitted as soon as possible. Your local Fire Service may be able to support you with this.
- Keep pets/animals away from the tubing as they may try to chew through the oxygen tubing.

How long will I be treated with oxygen?

Every person is different, and it is impossible to tell if you will always need oxygen therapy. An assessment will be carried out by the local home oxygen team who will give you advice on how and when to use the oxygen or if it is to be removed. The local home oxygen team will also assess and advise if you should continue to receive oxygen for the long term.

Can I have too much oxygen?

Yes. Oxygen is a prescribed drug for which all patients must be carefully assessed.

Can I travel with oxygen?

Yes. This can be discussed in more depth with your local home oxygen team.

What happens next?

On discharge you will be referred to your local home oxygen team who will arrange a review of your oxygen levels approximately eight weeks after your discharge from hospital. This may involve taking a small blood sample or measuring your oxygen levels with a finger probe. At this assessment you will be told your test results. **If your oxygen levels are back to normal, the oxygen therapy may be stopped.**

If you do not hear from the local home oxygen team within eight weeks of discharge from hospital, please phone them during normal working hours:

Area: Scarborough / Whitby / Filey / Hunmanby
Local Home Oxygen Team: Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust
Telephone: 01653 609609
Email: hnf-tr.csspoc@nhs.net

Area: Vale of York
Local Home Oxygen Team: York District Hospital
Telephone: 01904 726448

Area: Bridlington / Driffield / Beverley
Local Home Oxygen Team: City Health Care Partnership
Telephone: 01482 247111

Advice if you feel unwell at home

If you experience any of the following symptoms, please contact your GP or local home oxygen team as soon as possible:

- increasing shortness of breath
- disorientation or confusion
- morning headaches or heaviness
- increased tiredness or drowsiness

If you are very unwell or need urgent advice, please call 111 or 999.

References

Asthma+Lung UK (formerly British Lung Foundation)

British Thoracic Society

Baywater Healthcare

York & Scarborough Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation

Trust Guidelines

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact Hazael Kavanagh, Scarborough Hospital, Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO11 6QL

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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