

Oxygen Safety

General Information

Your doctor has prescribed oxygen to help your heart and lungs work better.

Oxygen is safe if you use it correctly. Your doctor has chosen a dose for you. Follow his or her directions carefully.

The following are general safety tips.

Smoking Dangers

Oxygen will start a fire when it mixes with flammable objects, such as cigarettes.

Smoking while using oxygen is very dangerous. It could start a fire.

- **Never smoke while using oxygen.**
- If you smoke, turn your oxygen off for at least 15 minutes before smoking. It takes that long for the oxygen to leave your clothing, hair and skin.
- Do not use oxygen around open flames, such as matches or lighters.
- Stay at least 8 feet away from someone who is smoking.
- Put “No Smoking — Oxygen in Use” signs in your home. Put one at each entrance and one in the room near the oxygen equipment. Make sure people can see the signs.

Fire Hazards

When oxygen mixes with flammable materials, it will help them burn hotter and faster.

Oxygen is in the air around you. Keep all flammable materials away from your oxygen equipment and tubing.

- Do not use your oxygen around open flames, matches, stoves, grills or space heaters.
- Do not use or store your oxygen in an area that does not have air flowing through it, such as a closet.
- Keep the oxygen unit away from oil, grease or aerosol sprays.
- Do not use petroleum-based products (such as Vaseline®) on your skin.
- Be careful around electrical devices or toys that make sparks.
- Do not leave the cannula in your bed or under furniture cushions. If you leave the oxygen unit on while you aren't using it, the oxygen will leak into these items. A spark or flame could cause a fire.
- Turn off your oxygen equipment when you are not using it.

Driving With Oxygen in the Car

Please follow these directions for your safety, and the safety of others in your car and on the road.

- When possible, let your oxygen supplier deliver your oxygen to you.
- Drive with extra care and concern for the oxygen equipment in your car.
- Do not put the oxygen equipment in the trunk. Liquid oxygen equipment can release oxygen into the air. This is normal. But oxygen can build up in a small area like a car. A spark or flame that comes in contact with this built-up oxygen could cause a fire.
- Keep your car ventilated by opening the windows. (Even in the winter.)
- Keep liquid oxygen containers in an upright position. When tipped over, they can spill some liquid oxygen. Touching spilled oxygen can burn your skin. The spill can also start a fire if a spark or flames comes in contact with the oxygen.
- Keep high-pressure oxygen cylinders secured with a strap or put it in a rack. A cylinder can become dangerous when heated or if the tip is broken.
- Never smoke in a car that has oxygen equipment in it.
- Keep oxygen equipment away from open flames, sparks or heat.

Whom to Call to Quit Smoking

Allina Health

- Tobacco Intervention Program at Abbott Northwestern Hospital
— 612-863-1648
- Tobacco Intervention Program at Mercy Hospital
— 763-236-8008
- Tobacco Intervention Program at River Falls Area Hospital
— 715-307-6075

- *United Hospital Lung and Sleep Clinic Tobacco Cessation Program
— 651-726-6200
- *Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing (LiveWell Center) tobacco intervention coaching
— 612-863-5178

Other

- Quit Partner
— 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or quitpartnermn.com
- Minnesota Department of Health
— health.state.mn.us/quit
- online tobacco cessation support
— smokefree.gov
- American Lung Association/
Tobacco Quit Line
— 651-227-8014 or 1-800-586-4872
- Chantix® GetQuit Support plan
— 1-877-CHANTIX (1-877-242-6849) or get-quit.com
- financial aid for Chantix® or Nicotrol® inhaler
— 1-866-706-2400 or pfizerrxpathways.com
- *Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center's Residential Treatment Program
— 1-800-344-5984 or 1-507-266-1930
- Plant Extracts aromatherapy
— 1-877-999-4236

To Order Oxygen Supplies

- Call your oxygen supplier:
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allinahealth.org

*There may be a cost to you. Check with your insurance provider.