

Respiratory Physiology and Sleep

Stopping oxygen therapy at home

You no longer need to have oxygen at home.

During an assessment we took a small blood sample. This sample showed us the oxygen levels in your blood were normal.

Oxygen therapy will not help your breathlessness if your blood oxygen levels are normal. Oxygen is a drug that can cause problems if prescribed to people who don't need it. In some people, it can cause your blood carbon dioxide levels to increase, which can make you unwell.

If you still suffer from breathlessness, this may be because of your heart or lung condition, and not because of low oxygen levels.

Why your breathing feels better when using oxygen

Breathing oxygen can calm your breathing and reassure you psychologically. As you feel reassured, your breathing rate slows, and you feel calmer. But your body does not need the oxygen.

Breathing may feel better on oxygen as you can feel the pressure or flow of oxygen into your nose or mouth. This makes your brain believe you can breathe easier. But this is not a physical need for oxygen.

You can become psychologically dependent on oxygen. But when taught other breathing management techniques, your confidence can return and you'll learn to manage without oxygen therapy.



How you can manage breathlessness

Your nurse or physiotherapist will give you advice and strategies to help manage your breathlessness. These may include:

- breathing exercises
- body positioning
- anxiety management
- using your inhalers and nebulisers in the right way
- using a handheld fan on your face - this can give the same sensation as oxygen
- a pulmonary rehabilitation programme - an exercise and education treatment programme to help you:
 - improve your fitness
 - learn how to manage your breathlessness better
- if you smoke, getting help to quit
- drinking and eating healthily and managing your weight

The British Lung Foundation have information about and techniques for managing breathlessness. You can look on their website (www.asthmaandlung.org.uk).

How we stop your oxygen therapy

We'll reduce your dose of oxygen slowly. If we find that you don't need oxygen anymore, we'll discuss this with you.

We'll arrange a second appointment with you to make sure your oxygen levels are stable before we remove it. You can always ring us if you have any questions or concerns.

You can be re-referred to us if your condition changes.

Patient Information

Contact details

Respiratory Physiology and Sleep Department

University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Tel: 024 7696 6734

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, contact 024 7696 6734 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

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