

Oxygen cylinders: use and guidance

It is important you take time to read and understand this information. You have to follow all the conditions listed for the improvement you would like to carry out. You may need to get separate approval from someone else, comply with health and safety legislation or a local byelaw before you start any work.

If you need to use oxygen cylinders at your home, because of a medical condition, you must tell us immediately by calling us on 0345 8 507 507. We will work with you to agree suitable safe storage arrangements.

You should be instructed in the use of the oxygen equipment by the NHS as they would normally provide this equipment.

Avoid using any oil, lubricant, grease or hand cream when handling oxygen equipment as these are known to contribute to ignition. If any valves are hard to use then the equipment must be returned to the supplier for repair.

Most oxygen equipment provides a constant flow of gas to the person, most of which escapes as this is not inhaled. This oxygen leaks out and if the person is bedridden, the oxygen collects over bedding and is at serious risk of igniting. If the person smokes, then striking a match could ignite the bedding causing a serious fire and injury.

The risk is reduced if 'demand delivery' is used; these only provide oxygen when the person is breathing in, you should ask the provider to explain which type they are providing.

Accidental damage to the regulator or cylinder can have serious results. If the cylinder falls and the stem of the regulator is damaged by impact, there is a risk of the regulator becoming a projectile

Acceptable methods of storing oxygen cylinders include:

- cylinders stored upright in a cart or
- securing them to a wall in an upright position. If this is the option required then you must check with us before this is carried out

This storage information applies to both full and near empty cylinders, as there is no way of telling for sure if a cylinder is empty or not.

Our employees will not adjust, change or move oxygen bottles, you should contact the supplier or NHS if you are having problems with your cylinder.

Please also be aware of the following.

- A full and complete risk assessment must be carried out by a competent service provider before any oxygen cylinders and equipment is supplied and used in the home
- A competent installer must be used who will provide all the necessary help following the installation
- A full risk assessment must be carried every six months to ensure that the equipment remains safe and is being used correctly
- Do not smoke or use e-cigarettes while using oxygen
- All oxygen equipment should be kept well away from candles (including scented candles) barbecues and naked flames such as open fires and gas cookers
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher at home and install a smoke detector (if none are fitted)
- Regular test your smoke detector to make sure it works and if the battery, if not hardwired, needs replacing
- Make sure the oxygen supply is turned off when it is not being used
- Do not place the mask or cannula on soft material while the oxygen is still flowing, this could cause the material to become flammable
- Always make sure that oxygen equipment is used in a well-ventilated area keeping a window or door in the room slightly open
- Cannular can easily become blocked and masks can become dirty over time, only use a clean damp cloth and mild non-scratch cleaning materials to clean the equipment and allow to dry before using
- Make sure that all tubing does not get trapped or crushed under doors and furniture as this can stop or reduce the oxygen flow
- Never change the flow rate as ordered by the health care professional unless specifically told to do so
- A back up cylinder should be provided along with an oxygen concentrator in case of power cuts or machine failure

- If you have workmen / trades people in the home make them aware of the location of the oxygen equipment and pipework with the required precautions before any work takes place
- Oxygen is a medically prescribed drug and must only be used by the person it is prescribed for, under no circumstances should you allow anyone else to use it
- You should inform your home insurance company that you are using and storing oxygen in your home
- When your tenancy ends, the installation must be removed and all surfaces should be repaired and the property returned to its original status. If this work is not left to an expected standard, we will complete the required work. The full cost of this will be your responsibility and you will be recharged for this

If there is anything you do not understand, or you have any questions, please contact us 0345 8 507 507.



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