

# Living Well with COPD™

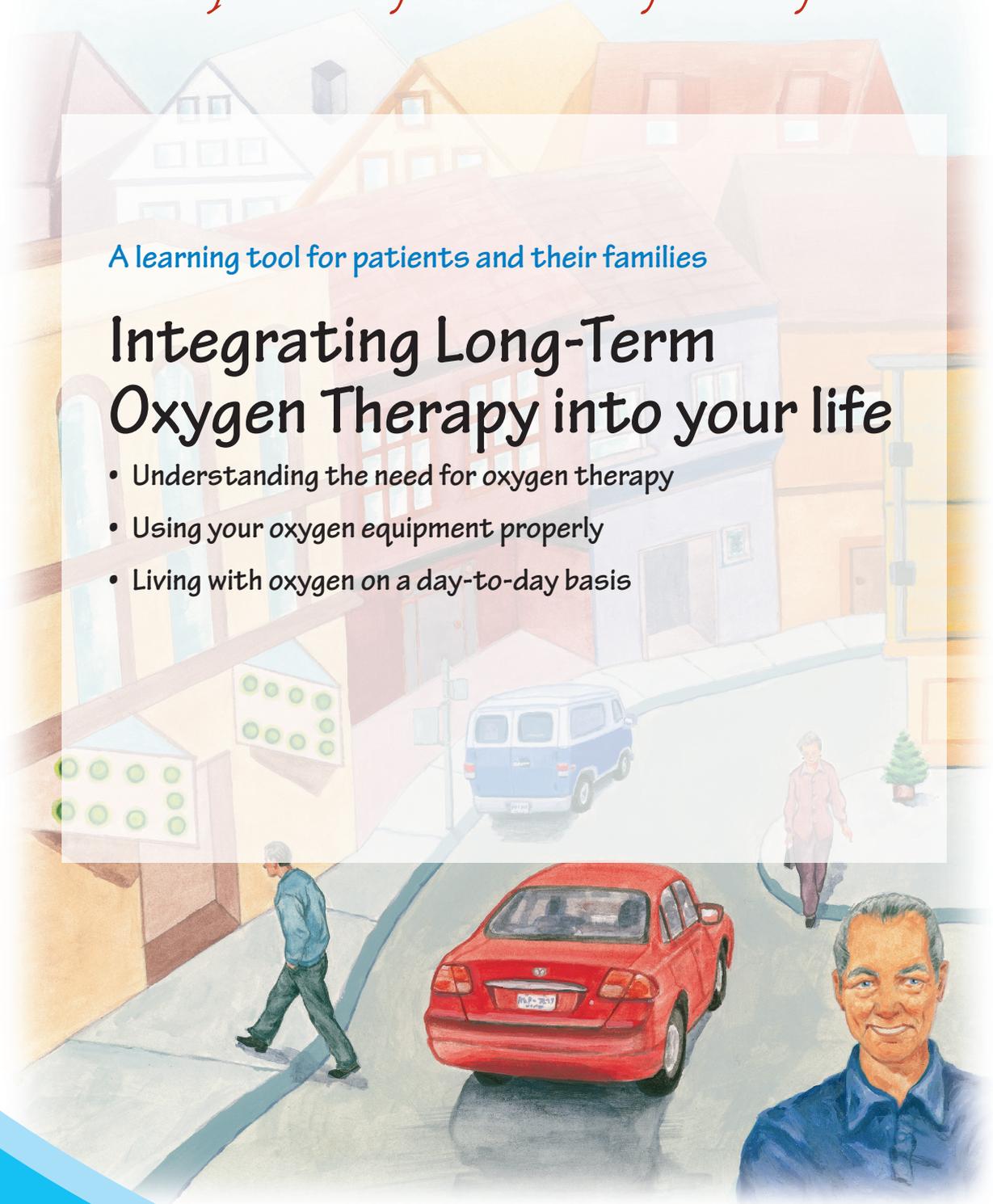
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

*A plan of action for life*

*A learning tool for patients and their families*

## Integrating Long-Term Oxygen Therapy into your life

- Understanding the need for oxygen therapy
- Using your oxygen equipment properly
- Living with oxygen on a day-to-day basis



This guide belongs to:

2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2011

## The skills you need to manage your COPD

COPD is a disease that can seriously affect every part of your life. Simple activities you once took for granted, such as taking a walk or getting dressed, can become major challenges. Flare-ups or worsening symptoms – the main cause of hospitalization in people with COPD – can further affect your quality of life. Fortunately, there is a lot that you can do to overcome and prevent these limitations, and improve your well-being. This is why we have created this series of workbooks on COPD self-management.

### How can this program help me with self-management of the disease?

This is an educational program in which you learn skills to manage your disease and adopt healthy new lifestyle behaviours. This series of workbooks is part of the “Living Well with COPD” program, based on real-life experiences.

Medical experts and patients with COPD – people just like you – worked together to update this program that you can customize for yourself. National and international guidelines agree that patient education and self-management are valuable for people with COPD.

We also tested this educational program as part of a clinical trial. And the results are very encouraging. Patients who used these workbooks in collaboration with their healthcare worker, “case manager” or resource person and physician had fewer hospitalizations and fewer emergency room visits. Their overall health also improved, enabling them to do more of the activities they enjoyed, and better cope with their disease.

This is your guide. Use it to write down your questions or concerns. Share it with people close to you so that they can understand what you are going through. Discuss whatever thoughts and feelings you have with your case manager or resource person and your physician.

### Good luck with your program,

Dr. Jean Bourbeau



Montreal Chest Institute,  
McGill University Health Centre (MUHC),  
Montreal, Canada

Mrs. Diane Nault



Clinical Nursing Consultant  
Regional home care services for chronic  
respiratory patients of the Hôpital  
Maisonneuve-Rosemont, Montreal, Canada

# Welcome to the module “Integrating Long-Term Oxygen Therapy into your life”

COPD patients are often concerned by the idea of getting long-term oxygen therapy.

**Living well with COPD means understanding the disease and its treatments well.**  
Oxygen therapy is an integral part of the COPD treatment.

In this module, we are going to explain why you need oxygen, how the oxygen equipment works and how this therapy can help you to live well on a day-to-day basis.

## In this module, you will learn more about:

- oxygen therapy p 7
- how oxygen helps p 9
- using your oxygen equipment p 11
- living well with oxygen on a day-to-day basis p 17



## Your doctor has said you need Long-Term Oxygen Therapy

Do you know why your doctor has prescribed oxygen therapy?

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What worries you most about the idea of using oxygen?

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Do you know someone on oxygen therapy? If so, have you spoken to that person about it?

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## Understanding what Oxygen Therapy means

Many people on oxygen are anxious at the thought of having to use oxygen: this is a normal reaction. Their main concerns are:

- **the significant changes oxygen therapy will make in their life**
- **the dangers and the fears related to the use of oxygen**

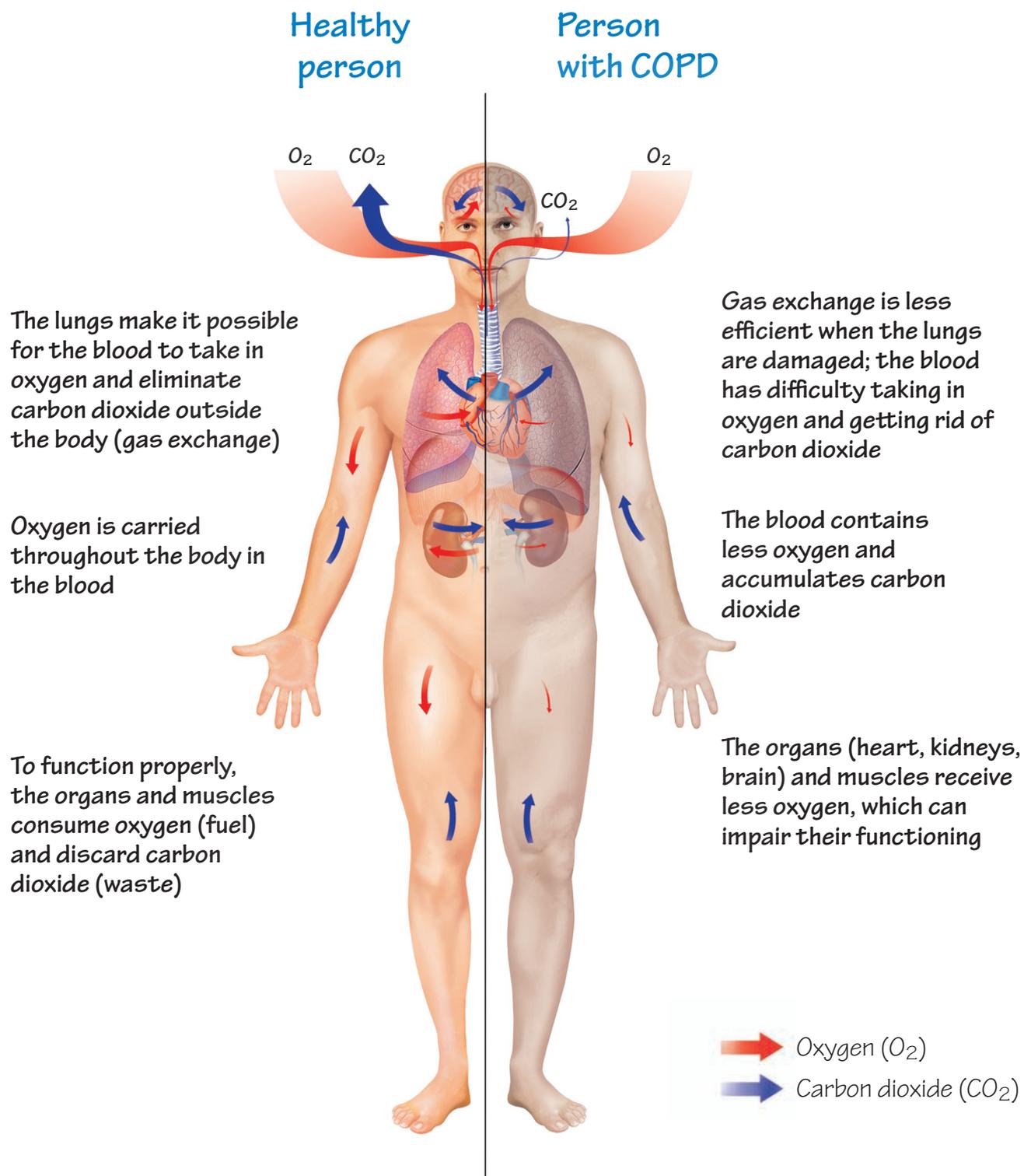
In this module, these topics will be discussed and you will find out more about your oxygen therapy, which will take care of any fears you may have. Do not hesitate to ask your doctor or resource person for advice.

### Oxygen is essential for life

Oxygen is the body's "fuel." The organs and muscles use oxygen to function and discard carbon dioxide as waste.

As COPD gets worse, the amount of oxygen the lungs carry to the blood decreases. This can occur gradually, without being noticed. The carbon dioxide in some COPD patients' blood can also increase because their lungs can no longer eliminate it properly.

## Understanding Oxygen Therapy



# Understanding Oxygen Therapy

## A chronic lack of oxygen in the blood

Your doctor may have said you have “chronic respiratory failure” and therefore need long-term oxygen therapy. **Chronic respiratory failure** is a permanent lack of oxygen in the blood, with or without accumulation of carbon dioxide.

**A chronic lack of oxygen in the blood may cause difficulties in the body’s function, and may show up in several ways:**

1. More rapid onset of fatigue, especially during physical activity.
2. Problems with memory and concentration; sleep disorders.
3. Swelling (oedema) of the legs.
4. A bluish tinge (cyanosis) of the fingertips, earlobes or lips.
5. Onset and/or aggravation of heart disease.

## How to tell if you have a chronic lack of oxygen in the blood

Your doctor examines you and decides to measure the amount of oxygen in your blood using one of these tests:

### Oximetry

A pulse oximeter is a device with a sensor that attaches to the finger or ear to estimate the amount of oxygen in the blood, or “oxygen saturation ( $SpO_2$ ).” This test, which is quick and painless, can tell whether your oxygen levels are too low ( $SpO_2$  less than 90%). If so, a more precise arterial blood gas test is performed.

### Arterial blood gas test, or “arterial blood gas measurement”

A small amount of blood is taken from a blood vessel (usually an artery in the wrist). This test can accurately measure the amount of oxygen (or  $PaO_2$ ) and carbon dioxide (or  $PaCO_2$ ) in the blood. It can confirm the need for oxygen therapy.

If you have chronic lack of oxygen in the blood, your doctor will prescribe a long-term oxygen therapy. **This treatment is designed to maintain your blood oxygen at the level required for your organs to function properly.**

# Understanding how oxygen helps

Are you familiar with the advantages of long-term oxygen therapy?

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## Objective

- To increase the amount of oxygen in your body to respond to the needs of the various organs (brain, heart, muscles, etc.)

## Benefits

- Prolongs life, even though oxygen cannot improve lung function
- Reduces the feeling of fatigue and shortness of breath in some patients
- Improves exercise tolerance, sleep and quality of life
- Improves heart function

## Side effects

- None or minor (dry nose and eyes) if patients comply with proper use

## Points to remember

1. Long-term oxygen therapy is not habit-forming.
2. Oxygen therapy is effective only when you are on it **continuously for at least 15 hours/day because the human body cannot store oxygen**. If you stop the therapy, the amount of oxygen in your blood will drop within a few minutes.
3. If you smoke, the treatment may be less effective and **you risk burns or causing a fire**.
4. In some provinces, **a long-term oxygen treatment may not be prescribed for people who smoke**.

## Your oxygen prescription

Oxygen is a medication. As with other medication, your doctor prescribes an oxygen therapy that is adapted to your needs.

### What has your doctor prescribed?

- **Oxygen flow rate** (in litres per minute): this is the amount of oxygen required to cover your body's needs. You may have different flow rates: resting, on exertion and sleeping.
- **Duration of administration:** this is the number of hours per day during which you will have to take your therapy. **At least 15 hours per day** are necessary for the therapy to be effective.
- **Type of equipment** (supply) that will provide the oxygen.

You need to use your oxygen for \_\_\_\_\_ hours per day.

Single flow rate: \_\_\_\_\_ litres/minute

Different flow rates: resting \_\_\_\_\_ litres/minute

on effort \_\_\_\_\_ litres/minute

sleeping \_\_\_\_\_ litres/minute

### For your treatment to be effective:

- If you take your oxygen at a different flow rate than the one prescribed or for only a few hours per day, **the benefits will decrease or simply disappear.**
- When oxygen is prescribed **at all times, at least 15 hours per day** are needed.
- If your oxygen is prescribed **only when sleeping**, you should use it **every time you sleep**, even when taking a nap.
  - In some provinces, **nocturnal oxygen therapy (taken only during sleep) may not be prescribed.**

### When will the oxygen start to take effect?

Some people feel the effects of the oxygen quickly. Others need a little more time. Oxygen therapy is beneficial in the long term; do not get discouraged if you do not experience immediate improvement.

### Can the effect of the oxygen wear off?

No, but the worsening of your respiratory failure may require a greater oxygen flow rate to maintain enough oxygen in the blood. Your doctor will monitor the state of your health and your test results on a regular basis in order to adjust your oxygen flow rate to the needs of your body.

# Becoming familiar with the different types of oxygen equipment

What do you know about the ways of administering oxygen? Have you seen oxygen equipment?

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What type of equipment has been prescribed for you?

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## There are different types of equipment to supply oxygen

Oxygen can be administered using:

- a concentrator (the most economic mode of supply)
- oxygen cylinders
- liquid oxygen tanks (the most expensive option)

All these **equipments are easy to use**. All you need to do is regulate the flow of oxygen coming out.

This equipment may be **fixed or portable**. Fixed equipment covers oxygen needs at home. Portable equipment is used to deliver oxygen when you leave home.

Your doctor will decide whether you need oxygen for your trips outside your home. In some provinces, portable oxygen **is not offered automatically**. If you need oxygen for your outings, your resource person will select **the equipment best suited to your needs**.

## Oxygen concentrators

### What is an oxygen concentrator?

An oxygen concentrator is an electrical device that **concentrates the oxygen in ambient air**: this means it does not have to be refilled.

Most concentrators are **fixed** (they weigh 20-30 kg and are on wheels). Others are **portable** on a small cart, on a strap or in a backpack.

Some concentrators are combined with another electrical device, a compressor, which allows the refilling of oxygen cylinders for use on trips outside.

### What is the autonomy of a concentrator?

**Fixed** concentrators have an electrical connection. **Portable** concentrators are equipped with batteries and can also be plugged into an electrical connection. An alarm will sound if there is a malfunction or power failure.

### Don't forget!

**Every time you turn on the concentrator**, wait for a few seconds before checking the flow control. **When you turn it off**, do not reset the flow control to zero. Leave it open to relieve excess pressure.

Do not place objects on top of the concentrator, especially glasses of water. Do not obstruct the air-intake filters: for example, do not place the concentrator on a carpet, or store it in a closet.



#### Your resource person will:

- Give you detailed use and maintenance advice
- Explain specific safety precautions for this mode of supply

# Oxygen cylinders

## What is a medical oxygen cylinder?

A medical oxygen cylinder contains **oxygen in gas form**, compressed under heavy pressure in order to contain more gas. A pressure regulating valve (regulator) at the top of the cylinder reduces the oxygen pressure to make it usable.

## What is the autonomy of an oxygen cylinder?

**The autonomy depends on the size of the cylinder and the flow rate used**, which is why these cylinders are most often used as a supplement to a concentrator; i.e., when you are going out, or if there is a malfunction or power failure.

Cylinders may also be equipped with an “oxygen saving valve,” which increases their autonomy: the valve cuts off the oxygen just after your inhalation, and restores the flow on your next inhalation.

Depending on their size and weight, **some cylinders can be transported using a strap or a small cart.**

## Don't forget!

**Every time you turn on the cylinder**, check the flow control. **When you have finished using your cylinder**, turn off the valve, wait for the indicator to return to the red section and then change the flow rate to zero.

### Your resource person will:

- Give you detailed use and maintenance advice
- Choose with you the size of your cylinder based on your needs
- Help you gauge the number of hours of autonomy of a cylinder
- Explain specific safety precautions for this mode of supply

## Liquid oxygen tanks

### What is a liquid oxygen tank?

These tanks look like Thermos bottles; they contain **liquid oxygen** (oxygen liquefies at very low temperatures): this means a large amount of oxygen can be stored in a small space. Liquid oxygen becomes gas as it leaves the tank and it is this gas that you inhale.



### What is the autonomy of a liquid oxygen tank?

You will receive two types of tanks:

- **A large tank** that does not leave your home. This tank does not use electricity but needs to be refilled on a regular basis by your provider, depending on the flow rate and the number of hours of use per day (on average 2 to 4 times a month).
- **One small portable tank**, for moving around your home or outside. You refill this tank yourself from the large tank. It can be transported using a strap, on a cart or in a backpack.

### Don't forget!

**Liquid oxygen evaporates:** The amount of liquid oxygen in the tank will dissipate even if the flow control is at zero. This means it is a good idea to refill the portable tank just before going out.

**Liquid oxygen is extremely cold** and can cause burns: if the tank valve releases a small amount of liquid oxygen, wipe it with a clean, dry cloth and always wear gloves.

#### Your resource person will:

- Give you detailed use and maintenance advice
- Help you gauge the number of hours of autonomy of your equipment
- Explain how to refill the portable tank yourself
- Explain specific safety precautions for this mode of supply
- In certain provinces, liquid oxygen **is not provided by the government due to its high costs**

# Your oxygen equipment accessories

## Nasal cannula

The oxygen will be delivered from the supply to your nose by means of the “**cannula**.”

- **Blow your nose regularly** to prevent secretions from building up in your nose.
- **Breathe through your nose.** Breathing through your mouth dries out the mucous membranes.
- If your nose is dry, **use a water-based lubricant.** Never use petroleum jelly (Vaseline®) or an oil-based lubricant.
- **Clean your nasal cannula every day and change them on a regular basis (around every 3-4 weeks).**
- Before attaching your nasal cannula, **make sure the oxygen is flowing correctly out of the tips** by immersing them in a glass of water (bubbles appear) or touching the ends of the cannula with a wet finger (cold sensation).

## Connector tube

This is an extension tube that lets you move around the home while remaining connected to the oxygen supply.

- **Make sure this tube is not twisted or caught**, which would prevent the normal flow of oxygen.
- As with the cannula, you can immerse the tip of the tube in a glass of water **to make sure the oxygen is flowing correctly.**
- **Avoid multiple connections:** an excessive length of tubing (more than 30 metres) and multiple connections increase the chance of leaks and reduce the amount of oxygen you are inhaling.



## Safety rules

**Oxygen does not burn or explode, but it does fuel fire.** Three things are needed to start a fire: oxygen, heat and combustible material. When a flame or spark has an oxygen supply, the fire burns much faster and at a much higher temperature. It is very important to observe the following safety rules to avoid serious incidents that could affect you or those around you.



1. **Never smoke or let anyone smoke in the room where your oxygen supply is located (concentrator, cylinder, tank, nasal cannula). Never let anyone smoke close to you when you are using your oxygen.**

If you or members of your family smoke, this is a good time to stop. There are lots of ways of helping you to quit smoking; talk to your doctor or resource person about it. Do not forget that in some provinces, **oxygen therapy may not be prescribed for people who smoke.**



2. **Never place the oxygen supply near live flame, sparks or heat such as a lighter, candles, matches, fireplace, radiator, furnace, water heater or stove.**

Keep the oxygen supply at least 3 metres (10 feet) away from any source of flame or spark. If there is a power failure, use a flashlight. If you use a gas or electric stove, turn off your oxygen equipment and take off your nasal cannula before using the stove.



3. **Do not oil or lubricate your oxygen equipment.**

Keep the equipment away from any flammable material (grease, oil, paint, gasoline, solvent, alcohol, etc.).



4. **Do not use your equipment when:**

- You are applying to your body an oil-based product (cream, make-up, insect repellent)
- You are using an aerosol container (paint, air freshener, insecticide, etc.)



5. **Do not try to repair your equipment yourself.** Contact your resource person or your home oxygen provider.

## Living with Long-Term Oxygen Therapy

The use of oxygen is an integral part of your treatment for COPD. You are now going to learn how your oxygen therapy will help you to live well on a day-to-day basis:

- To **do everyday activities and those that require physical exertion** (such as exercise)
- To **sleep well**
- To **travel**
- During **periods of symptoms worsening** (exacerbations)



## Physical activities and oxygen

Many day-to-day activities require physical effort, for instance, climbing stairs, exercising, cycling, washing, making your bed, using the toilet, housework and even sexual relations. **Oxygen needs increase with effort intensity.** Arm movements (for example, washing your hair or face) use a great deal of oxygen. This is why it is so important to use oxygen while doing these types of activities.

### Objective

- To increase the amount of oxygen in your blood and supply enough to all organs during physical effort

### Benefits

- Be less tired, get back energy
- Have less shortness of breath on exertion (for some people)
- Improve tolerance on exertion (e.g., taking longer walks)
- Do more activities you enjoy

### Points to remember

#### 1. Oxygen can help you accomplish your day-to-day tasks:

- Use oxygen when you are making your bed, getting dressed, taking a bath or shower, using the toilet, etc.

#### 2. Your oxygen prescription will indicate whether you need to increase your flow rate during exertion.

- In some provinces, **oxygen to be used only during exertion may not be prescribed.**

Talk about it with your doctor and your resource person, who will be able to help you.

## Getting a good night's sleep with oxygen

COPD patients often have sleeping disorders. Because breathing slows down, the amount of oxygen in the blood decreases during sleep, which can be disruptive.

Other sleep disorders, for instance, a disease called “sleep apnea,” can occur in people with COPD. These disorders may require special treatment, other than oxygen.

### Objective

- To prevent a drop in the amount of oxygen in the blood during the night (nocturnal desaturation)

### Benefits

Oxygen taken when sleeping may:

- Improve the quality of sleep for some people
- Avoid complications associated with night-time drop in oxygen

### Points to remember

1. If sleep disorders persist in spite of the use of oxygen, talk to your doctor about it because a more in-depth study could be needed (sleep study).
2. It is possible that you may need some time to adapt to the use of nasal cannula during sleep. There exist different types of cannula and comfort adapters. Talk to your resource person if necessary.
3. Do not forget that in some provinces, **nocturnal oxygen (taken only during sleep) may not be prescribed.**



**Do you have any concerns about the use of oxygen during sleep? If so, which ones?**

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Talk about them with your doctor and your resource person, who will be able to help you.

## Travelling with oxygen

### Objectives

- To continue travelling (for work, recreation, etc.)
- To plan your trip carefully to minimise unexpected situations

### Benefit

- Make the most of your trip



### Points to remember

1. Let your resource person know **at least 1 month** before your departure.
2. If possible, arrive at your destination **on a business day**. Verify with your resource person whether you will need to rent the oxygen equipment once you have arrived at your destination.
3. There are different precautions to take with oxygen, depending on the **means of transportation used** and **where you are going** (a trip to another country, a trip in a recreational vehicle, a cruise, etc.). **Medical and administrative procedures are sometimes necessary**: set aside enough time for them before your departure.
4. If you foresee travelling:
  - By **car**, make sure that your equipment is properly attached, if possible, within a specifically designed support, and standing on the backseat.
  - By **train or boat**, contact the transportation company who will be able to answer to your needs.
  - By **plane**, contact the airline company (they normally supply oxygen during the flight) and expect additional costs. You should inform the airline company in advance, since some administrative procedures are necessary; for example, they may ask you for a medical certificate. Note: it is important that you use the oxygen during the flight since the oxygen concentration in the plane decreases as the plane increases its altitude.

**Are you planning a trip this year? If so, when and by which means of transportation?**

If you are planning a trip, talk to your doctor and your resource person about it. They will help you plan your trip and will be able to give you additional information.

## Using oxygen during a worsening of COPD symptoms (exacerbation)

During a worsening of your symptoms (exacerbation) your lungs function less well and the body's oxygen needs increase, which can lead to a drop in the amount of oxygen in the blood. This is why it is very important to use your oxygen during these periods.

### Objective

- To supply enough oxygen to your body during an exacerbation

### Benefits

- Be less tired and short of breath
- Avoid complications and reduce the risk of hospitalization

### Points to remember

1. Oxygen does not treat the cause of the exacerbation but it avoids some complications.
2. Follow your oxygen prescription carefully:
  - **During a COPD exacerbation try to use your oxygen all the time (24/7).**
  - Increase your oxygen flow rate **only** on your doctor's advice.

- Talk to your resource person and your doctor about using your oxygen therapy during a worsening of COPD symptoms.
- Contact your doctor immediately or go to the Emergency Room if you notice the onset or aggravation of the following symptoms: headaches, drowsiness, confusion, blue fingertips, sleep disorders, agitation or swelling (oedema) of the ankles.

## Adjusting to Long-Term Oxygen Therapy

Are you ready to use the oxygen your doctor has prescribed? \_\_\_\_\_

Oxygen can change the way you see yourself. You may feel trapped, of no use to your family and friends. You may feel embarrassed by other people's stares when you are using your equipment. **These are common reactions.**

We are going to look at the concerns often felt by people who are starting a long-term oxygen therapy:

- You can discuss them with your resource person.
- You can also develop a plan for improving the situation such as trying to get additional information, cultivating a positive attitude or asking for help.

# Adjusting to Oxygen Therapy

## Emotional Consequences

*(awareness of death and perception of the disease progression, feeling of dependency, loss of self-esteem...)*

My concerns:

My plan:

## Family-Related and Social Consequences

*(loss of job, limited recreational activities and mobility, isolation...)*

My concerns:

My plan:

## Equipment-Related Constraints

*(noise, tubing, deliveries...)*

My concerns:

My plan:

### Don't forget!

Don't keep your fears to yourself. Discuss your feelings with your doctor, your resource person, your family and friends.

## You have informed your family and friends that you have an oxygen treatment

How did they react to the news?

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Did they say they were afraid you wouldn't be able to enjoy life anymore or that you were going to die soon?

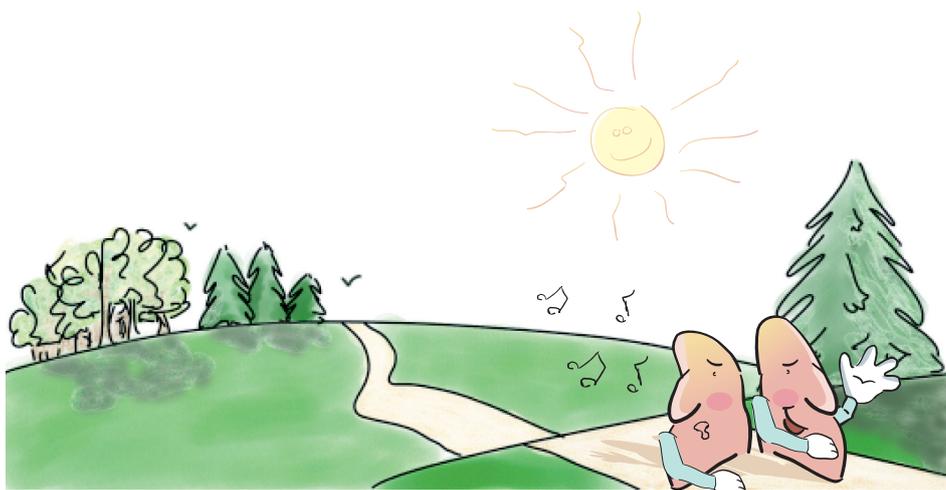
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You need to tell your family and friends that oxygen will allow you to **live longer and do more**. Tell them that even though you are on oxygen, you will continue **to be active and to enjoy life within your limits**. Tell them that having an oxygen treatment does not mean that you are on the terminal phase of your COPD; on the contrary, by not using the oxygen your life will not improve.

Ask your family and friends to express their concerns.

If you, your family or your friends have any concerns, talk to your doctor or resource person about them.



## Your resource person pays you a home visit

Your resource person would like to talk to you about long-term oxygen therapy and the equipment you are using.

The resource person asks you what you are feeling.

You say you have decided:

- To look at the positive side of things
- To try to get used to the idea of having to use oxygen

Your resource person asks:

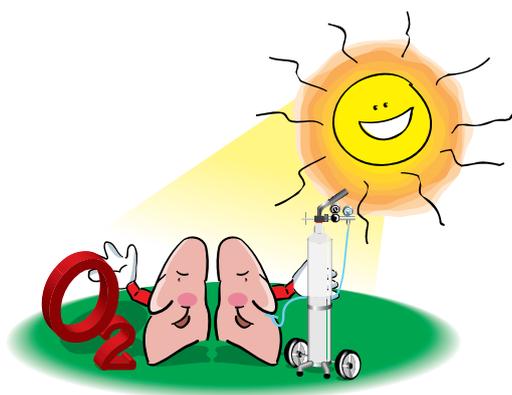
**What are the advantages of using oxygen?**

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### Don't forget!

- Oxygen is an important part of your treatment. **You need oxygen therapy to improve your quality of life.**
- Oxygen therapy **maintains the amount of oxygen needed for your organs to function properly.** With this therapy, **you will feel better and you will be able to do more.**



## You decide to ask your resource person some questions

If you have any questions about your long-term oxygen therapy, write them down here and ask them to your resource person and/or your doctor.

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It might also be helpful for you to meet other people with COPD who are on oxygen. You could discuss how they have adjusted to their therapy and how they rose to the challenge.

Talk to your resource person about wanting to meet other patients (he/she could set up a meeting) or contact some COPD patient associations in your region.

## Now test your confidence level with your Oxygen Therapy

On a scale of 1 to 10, circle the number that best represents whether you feel able:

To use and maintain your equipment properly.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all confident					Very confident				

To take your therapy as prescribed, \_\_\_\_\_ hours per day.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all confident					Very confident				

To use your oxygen away from home, **if prescribed**.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all confident					Very confident				

To use your oxygen for activities that require physical exertion (exercise, activities of daily living).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all confident					Very confident				

To use your oxygen during sleep.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all confident					Very confident				

## Now test your confidence level with your Oxygen Therapy

On a scale of 1 to 10, circle the number that best represents whether you feel able:

To travel with your oxygen.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10  
Not at all confident Very confident

To take your oxygen therapy all the time (24 hours per day) during a period of symptoms worsening.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10  
Not at all confident Very confident

On a scale of 1 to 10, circle the number that best indicates if you believe your oxygen therapy:

Will help you to prevent an aggravation of your health condition.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10  
Not at all confident Very confident

Will help you to do more activities in your day-to-day life.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10  
Not at all confident Very confident

## Integrating oxygen use into your everyday life

If you do not feel entirely comfortable with your long-term oxygen therapy, what are the reasons?

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What could you do to be more comfortable with your therapy?

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Talk to your doctor, your resource person, your family and friends about your feelings.

Remember: You have already been able to adapt to other changes.

Describe a change in your life to which you have already adapted. How did you feel?

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How did you manage to adapt to this change?

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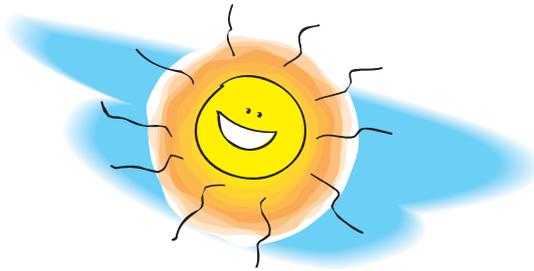
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Don't forget that you can also adapt to this change.

**You have the strength to do it!**

## Here are some suggestions for people who have to go on oxygen

- Set some life goals that are adapted to your state of health.
- Accept that you have to make some changes. Respect your limitations.
- Be creative.
- Keep a positive attitude.



**Life does not end because of COPD.  
Rise to the challenge.**

# My Oxygen Therapy

My Oxygen Prescription				
Duration	Flow Rate			
_____ hours/day	<b>single</b> _____ L/min	<b>resting</b> _____ L/min	<b>on exertion</b> _____ L/min	<b>sleeping</b> _____ L/min
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the prescribed flow rate.</li> <li>• In the event of an exacerbation (aggravation of COPD), use your oxygen all the time 24 hours/day and contact your resource person for an assessment of your health state.</li> </ul>				

General Recommendations	
Do	Don't
Inform your resource person of any changes to your prescription.	Never adjust the oxygen flow rate without a doctor's prescription.
Clearly display a "No smoking – I'm on oxygen" sign.	Don't smoke or let anyone smoke near you or your oxygen equipment.
Keep your oxygen equipment in a well-ventilated space and make sure the equipment is stored securely.	Keep your oxygen equipment away from any source of live flame (lighter, matches, candles, gas stove, etc.).
Clean your equipment on a regular basis following your resource person's instructions.	Keep your oxygen equipment away from heat sources (stove, heating). Your oxygen equipment should not be stored in a cupboard.
If your nose is dry, use only water-based lubricants.	Do not use your equipment when you are handling flammable materials (oil, grease, aerosol containers).
Check regularly for leaks (by immersing the tip of your nasal cannula and oxygen tube in a glass of water).	Avoid multiple connectors and excessive lengths of extension tubing.
Contact your resource person if any adjustments/repairs are necessary.	Don't try to repair your oxygen equipment yourself.

Don't Forget
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact your resource person if you have any questions about your equipment.</li> <li>• Contact your doctor immediately or go to the Emergency Room if you notice the onset or aggravation of the following symptoms: headaches, drowsiness, confusion, blue fingertips, sleep disorders, agitation or swelling (oedema) of the ankles.</li> </ul>











# Acknowledgements

## Second Canadian edition – February 2011

### Authors

J. Bourbeau, MD • M. Sedeno, MM • D. Nault, BSc (RN), MSc • F. Paquet, BSc (RN), MSc • S. Gagné, RRT  
• P. Leger, MD

### Participating Institutions

Montreal Chest Institute, McGill University Health Centre, Montreal, Canada  
Service régional de soins à domicile pour malades pulmonaires chroniques (SRSAD) de l'hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, Montréal, Canada  
VitalAire, Air Liquide Santé International, Gentilly, France

## First European edition – July 2009

### Authors

Dr. J. Bourbeau, MD • M. Sedeno, MM • J. Texereau, MD • P. Leger, MD

### Participating Institutions

Montreal Chest Institute, McGill University Health Centre, Montreal, Canada  
Air Liquide Claude Delorme Research Centre, Jouy-en-Josas, France  
VitalAire, Air Liquide Santé International, Gentilly, France  
Hôpital Civil de Strasbourg, Strasbourg, Allemagne  
Krankenhaus Kloster Grafschaft, Schmallingenberg, Allemagne  
Complejo Asistencial, Burgos, Espagne  
Hospital Clinic, Barcelona, Espagne  
Orlandi General Hospital, Bussolengo, Italie

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### Authors

C. Levasseur, BSc (RN), MSc • S. Bégin, BSc, RRT • M. Déziel, BSc (RN) • D. St-Jules, BSc (RN), MSc • E. Borycki, BSc (RN), MN • D. Nault, BSc (RN), MSc • V. Perreault, BSc (RN), MSc (candidate) • J. Bourbeau, MD, MSc, FRCPC

### Participating Institutions

Montreal Chest Institute, McGill University Health Centre, Montreal, Canada  
Hôpital Laval, Institut de cardiologie et de pneumologie de l'Université Laval, Sainte-Foy, Canada  
Regional Pulmonary Home Care Services, Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont affiliated with the Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada  
Centre hospitalier universitaire de Montréal, Pavillon Notre-Dame, Montréal, Canada  
Centre universitaire de santé de l'Estrie, Sherbrooke, Canada  
Hôpital du Sacré-Coeur affilié à l'Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada  
Centre hospitalier affilié universitaire de Québec, Pavillon St-Sacrement, Québec, Canada  
Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont affilié à l'Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada

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