

Community Respiratory Specialist Team

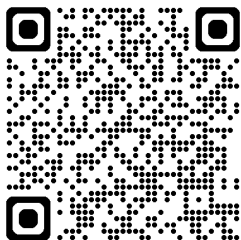
Ambulatory oxygen therapy



Information for patients, relatives, and carers.

Telephone: 0300 124 5909

Opening times: Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm.



Service provided by

Sirona
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Introduction

This leaflet has been designed to give you information about ambulatory oxygen therapy. We hope it answers some of the questions that you or those who care for you may have. It is not meant to replace the discussion between you and your medical team. It aims to help you understand more about what is discussed. If you have any questions about the information below, please contact us.

Ambulatory oxygen therapy

Ambulatory oxygen is a therapy designed to help those whose oxygen level in their blood drops when they are active. Its aim is to maintain an adequate blood oxygen level. This could:

- Help you keep moving.
- Allow you to do things that you might otherwise feel too breathless or tired to do.

In some lung diseases, the lungs do not keep up with the increased demands of the body during movement or exercise. This will result in your blood oxygen level decreasing. This may or may not also make you breathless.

Day-to-day activities and going out may be more comfortable for you when using this type of oxygen therapy.

The equipment used is usually either:

- A portable oxygen concentrator (POC). You carry this over your shoulder or in a trolley.
- A cylinder that you carry in a backpack.

It can be used anytime you are active, inside or outside the house. But you must not use it for more than a few minutes while you are sat still, or when you are sleeping.

You must be assessed to determine if you are suitable to have ambulatory oxygen.

Assessing you for ambulatory oxygen

If your doctor thinks you may be suitable for ambulatory oxygen therapy, then we will arrange to see you for an assessment. You will need to attend one of our clinics in Bristol, North Somerset, or South Gloucestershire, where we carry out all our assessments.

Questions

We will ask you a range of questions about your home and social life. We will also check your level of mobility. This will help us understand where and how oxygen might help you.

Six-minute Walk test

We will then ask you to perform a six-minute walk test. You will need to walk along a flat corridor for six minutes at your own comfortable pace. At the same time, you will be wearing a probe on your ear or finger to measure your blood oxygen level.

Decision and discussion

We can use the results of this test along with the information you have given us to decide if you are suitable for ambulatory oxygen. If you are, then we will talk to you about the type of oxygen equipment that is best suited to you and your lifestyle.

Repeat walk test

We'll then ask you to carry out another walk test while using the oxygen. This lets us work out:

- The suitability of the equipment.
- How much oxygen you would need from it.

Safety

Oxygen is a flammable gas (it can ignite and explode). So, we must be very cautious with people who smoke or are exposed to smokers in their home or social environments. We will do a risk assessment to ensure your home environment is safe for oxygen.

Starting ambulatory oxygen therapy

1. If your walk tests show that ambulatory oxygen may help you, we'll discuss with you what it involves and if you would like to trial it.
2. If you decide to start it, we'll send a prescription to your local oxygen supplier. They will bring you the equipment within a few days and show you how to use it.
3. We'll arrange to see you around six weeks later. Then we can check if it is helping and whether we need to make any changes to your treatment plan.
4. If you want to continue using it, we'll monitor you on an annual basis. If you decide that this is not the therapy for you, we will ask for it to be removed.

Deciding to use ambulatory oxygen therapy.

Some people decide that this is not a therapy they want to use. Others are keen to start it. It may be useful to discuss the possibility with family or those you live with. You can also bring someone to the appointment with you.

Things to remember:

- It is important to understand that you do not have to use oxygen therapy.
- To make it work, you must **want** to use it.

Oxygen equipment can be very expensive for the NHS. So, if you decide you do not want it, please let us know. We can arrange for it to be removed from your home.

You will need to visit us at one of our clinic locations across Bristol, North Somerset, or South Gloucestershire.

Contact details:

Telephone: 0300 124 5909

Let us know what you think and get involved.

Telephone: 0300 124 5300*

Email: sirona.hello@nhs.net

Website: [Link to Sirona website \(sirona-cic.org.uk\)](http://sirona-cic.org.uk)

*Calls from landlines are charged up to 10p per minute; calls from mobiles vary, please check with your network provider. This is not a premium-rate number.

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Registered Office

Sirona care & health CIC,
Badminton Rd Office, 2nd Floor,
Badminton Rd, Yate, BS37 5AF
Company Number: 07585003



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