

Community Respiratory Specialist Team

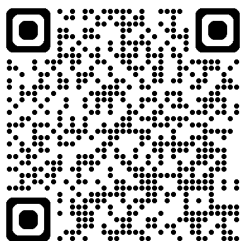
Advice on Oxygen treatment for Cluster Headaches in Adults



**Information for patients, relatives, and
carers.**

Telephone: 0300 124 5909

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



Service provided by

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What are Cluster Headaches and how could oxygen treatment help?

Cluster headaches are severe headaches that can happen multiple times a day for extended periods of time. In most patients, the headaches occur in groups with daily attacks that can last for weeks or months at a time. There will be periods of remission where you do not experience symptoms and are pain free.

Cluster headache is the only indication for oxygen therapy in the absence of low oxygen levels. High flow oxygen is very effective in some people to relieve symptoms of an acute cluster headache quickly and safely.

Oxygen is a medicine which has been prescribed and reviewed by staff trained in oxygen prescription and use.

Guidance

The general guidance is that if there is little to no relief from oxygen therapy within 15 minutes you should stop using it and move on to alternate therapies for your attack.

If the oxygen has **not** worked, you should try again with your next attack. If the attack has been relieved with the use of the oxygen attack, you should stay on the oxygen for a further 5-10 minutes after the pain has gone to 'mop up' the attack and prevent a possible rebound attack, which has been described by some people.

Where no neurology follow up is expected, your ongoing support should be from your GP with support from the local specialist Home Oxygen (HOS-AR) team where specifically oxygen needs to be discussed.

Where a patient's use is high, erratic or with regular technical call outs, the case will need to be discussed with your oxygen provider (Air Liquide) and your local HOS-AR service to review whether suitable supplies are in place and the use is appropriate and being used within guidance.

Your oxygen team may need to refer back to your GP or neurology team for specific clinical questions that may arise, such as considering alternative treatments when there has been a high use of oxygen.

If you **do not** find the oxygen works in treating your symptoms, or you would like to stop using it then please let your health care professional know. Ideally you should contact your community oxygen provider on **0300 124 5909** to discuss any removals. Alternatively, you can contact your GP.

Equipment

You will have a static concentrator for use at your home. You may also have portable cylinders that allow you to treat any cluster headaches whilst you are out and about.

You will also have been provided with a demand valve mask to deliver the oxygen through your cylinder. This mask facilitates safe delivery of the oxygen, with you controlling it.

As an alternative, you may have a face mask attached to a reservoir bag. Information on how to use this is provided by Air Liquide.

Whatever your mask type, oxygen flow rates should always be set at 12-15 l/min.

Do

- Use your oxygen as prescribed/advised by the home oxygen service.
- Inform the local fire service that you have oxygen in the house.
- Inform your home insurance company - this should not affect your premium.
- Have a working smoke alarm on each floor in your home and test it once a month.
- Keep oxygen cylinders upright.
- Ensure oxygen cylinders are stowed safely when travelling in a vehicle.
- Let your health care professional know if you are at risk of tripping over your oxygen tubing.

Do not

- Increase or decrease your oxygen without seeking advice.
- Smoke or vape when using oxygen.
- Use the oxygen when cooking with gas.
- Leave your oxygen running when not in use.
- Allow others to smoke/Vape near the oxygen.
- Use flammable products, such as cleaning fluids, paint thinner, petroleum-based creams, or aerosols, when you are on oxygen therapy.
- Use oxygen near naked flames.

Top tips

- Order your oxygen refills promptly to avoid running out – trying to avoid urgent deliveries where possible.
- Speak to the home oxygen service if you feel you need a change of equipment, or your needs have changed.

Follow Up

You will have been seen by or spoken to a specialist oxygen prescriber. You will also have had an assessment of the safety of oxygen being stored in your property. Routinely, we will contact every three years to review your oxygen therapy. However, if you feel contact is required sooner, please contact:

Sirona Community Respiratory Service: 0300 124 5909.

For any issues pertaining to refills, equipment faults, mask replacement, please contact:

Air Liquide: 0808 143 9999.

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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