

Information for managing supplementary home oxygen

Why is your baby discharging home with 'supplementary oxygen?'

Oxygen is essential to the lungs and bloodstream for your baby's growth, nutrition, lung development and brain development. It is important that your baby receives only the prescribed amount of flow, as recommended by your specialist team. Your baby will be discharging home on ___ litre of oxygen.

How is the oxygen supplied?

You will initially have two large tanks and two smaller tanks delivered to your home.

To order your supply, and to receive same day delivery, oxygen MUST be ordered before 9am. Service delivery is Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Contact the **Community Health Service** on **(04) 806 2556**.

How long will each oxygen tank last?

Always have one full and one spare oxygen tank. (If you think your supply will run low over the weekend / public holiday, please contact the service ahead of time)

O2 tank size	Litre / min	Duration
'D' mid-thigh	if 1/8L	7 days
'A' portable	if 1/8L	2 days

How long will my baby need supplementary oxygen?

It is difficult to know exactly how long your baby will need supplementary oxygen. When your baby is ready to be weaned, you will be guided with a plan and supported. Continual progress will be

assessed by your NICU & Community nurse case manager and consultant.

Are there any risks with home oxygen therapy?

Oxygen is highly flammable. You must not smoke or be near any open flames including gas heating, gas cooking equipment, candles, matches, open fires or cigarettes. When travelling by car or pram with the portable tank, it is recommended to stand upright.

Oxygen tubing from the tank can pose a tripping hazard so care needs to be taken.

How do I check if I am concerned about the breathing?

Colour – a change in your baby's colour from 'normal' is a strong indication that there is a problem either with your baby or the equipment.

Rate – know the difference between what is 'normal' for when baby is awake and asleep. Their rate may increase during or after a feed, when crying or very active. If the rate has increased at rest and baby is breathing harder, it may be an early sign of becoming unwell.

Noise – listen closely to the sound that your baby makes when breathing. If there is an increased noise, wheeze, grunt when breathing out, it may be an early sign of becoming unwell.

Movement – be familiar with your baby's chest movement when breathing. Notice any 'indrawing' between or below the rib cage. If this has changed at rest, it may be an early sign of becoming unwell.

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What do I do if my baby's breathing changes?

Check the equipment

1. Is the flow meter set as prescribed?
2. Is there enough oxygen in the cylinder?
3. Is the tubing secure and not kinked?
4. Are the nasal prongs secure in the nose?
5. Are the nasal prongs blocked?
6. Is there flow from the oxygen cylinder?

If your baby's breathing problem is not related to the equipment, call an ambulance on 111

Setting up the oxygen tank

To open the tank

- Remove the plastic taping off the cylinder valve & tear off the 'full' perforated tag
- Place the flow meter on the cylinder valve matching the pins with the holes (*like for like*)
- Wind and secure firmly
- Open the valve anti-clockwise (*you should hear a 'pop' sound or fizz sound*) and see the indicator dial flick into the green
- If you hear continuous hissing you may need to tighten the valve or the washer may be worn. Turn off, try again if this continues contact NICU
- Set the prescribed flow delivery rate and before attaching tubing, feel and listen for the flow from the outlet (*this ensures delivery of flow is effective and is coming out*)
- Attach the low flow tubing to the outlet

To discontinue the tank

- Turn off the flow delivery rate
- Close the valve clockwise and watch the flow meter gauge move down to the red after it is bled.

- 'Bleeding the tank' ensures no oxygen is sitting in flow lines, turn the flow delivery rate on & then off
- Remove the flow meter from the oxygen valve
- Tear off the perforated 'in use' tag so that it now says 'empty'. Contact Community Health Services for replacement. Empties are replaced for a one to one swap.

Contact the team for any questions on the following:

Community Health Service (04) 806 2556

NICU & Community Homecare (04) 806 0836

24hr NICU (04) 806 0800

Delivery of oxygen tanks