

Patient Information

Respiratory Physiology

Royal Stoke Ambulatory Oxygen Therapy (AOT)

- The body requires more oxygen when active and therefore a person's oxygen level may drop during exercise.
- Some patients with lung conditions may not need oxygen whilst they are at rest or walking short distances but may require supplementary oxygen when they are more active. This is called **Ambulatory Oxygen Therapy (AOT)**.
- AOT is delivered using portable equipment that most patients can carry or pull using a trolley.
- It is for patients whose oxygen levels drop during activity and want to improve their exercise tolerance and complete activities outdoors.
- AOT shows significant improvements in patient respiratory health status, as well as improving quality of life and exercise tolerance.
- When using AOT, you may still feel breathless due to the condition of your lungs and the activity that you are completing.
- More information about managing breathlessness will be provided by the Respiratory Team and your Consultant.

When is AOT needed?

You may be referred to the Respiratory Team for an appointment for an oxygen ambulatory assessment by your consultant or nurse specialist if you have chronic lung conditions and oxygen levels drop to less than 85% when exercising but is at normal levels at rest.

Ambulatory Oxygen is not a treatment for breathlessness or anxiety and is not suitable for:

- Housebound patients.
- Patients that use large walking aids or use a wheelchair outside as the patient is required to carry the equipment themselves whilst being moderately active.
- Smokers. This is due to safety risks that are associated.

Preparing for the AOT assessment

The assessment needs to be accurate and so the patient must be clear of any infections for 6 weeks before the appointment. If you have experienced any infections, you will need to reschedule your appointment. Please tel: 01782 675452 (Royal Stoke).

Please continue to take any medication for your respiratory system such as inhalers or tablets before attending your appointment.

Please remove any nail polish you have. This will ensure that the probe equipment used is able to measure your blood oxygen accurately.

Please wear comfortable clothing and footwear as you will be required to complete a 6-minute walk test which measures how far you can walk during this time.

- **The Walk test** includes monitoring your heart rate and oxygen levels either by a finger or ear probe.
- You may be asked to repeat the walking test to see how much supplementary oxygen you require.
- Please see the exercise test leaflet for further information.

After the AOT assessment

If the assessment results require ambulatory oxygen, a prescription will be given to you and explained including when you will be required to use it at your appointment. Information on backpacks and trolley bags to use to transport your oxygen will also be discussed.

The physiologist will complete the **Home Oxygen Order Form (HOOF)** form and send this to the oxygen provider depending on the area you live. Either Baywater or Air Liquide will contact you about your oxygen delivery to arrange delivery within 48 hours of your assessment.

AOT should not be used when you are at rest and only when you are active. Supplementary oxygen can be harmful if not used correctly.

Replacing oxygen cylinders

If your oxygen cylinders are running low, please contact your provider on the numbers at the bottom of the leaflet which will normally be replaced on the next working day. **Please ensure that you get in touch with your provider before you completely run out.**

Your oxygen flow rate is calculated to be safe and sufficient for you and should not be changed without medical advice/guidance. If you are feeling more breathless than normal this may be a sign that you are unwell, so please seek medical advice.

Travelling with Oxygen in the UK

Please make sure that if you are going on holiday in the UK as an oxygen therapy patient that you plan well in advance. Always inform the travel companies and insurers that you use home oxygen therapy.

Please contact your oxygen provider (Baywater) who can arrange for any oxygen equipment to be delivered to your holiday address which is free of charge.

Travelling with Oxygen abroad

If you plan to fly, please speak to your Respiratory Consultant about your fitness to fly before you book your flight.

The doctor will decide if you require a fit to fly assessment as your prescription may be changed during the flight.

Oxygen will need to be privately arranged and you may be required to pay for this service.

Safety when using Oxygen

Using oxygen is safe when used correctly. Instructions include:

- **DO NOT smoke or let anyone smoke (including e-cigarettes/vapes) near you when you are using your oxygen therapy.** Smoking will aggravate the condition and oxygen is highly flammable.

- **Keep away from naked flames and heat.** Keep your cylinders and your concentrator away from any fires (at least 3m from open fires and 1.5m from closed fires), heaters or cookers.
- **Turn your oxygen off when not in use.** Oxygen may build up in the material and make it more flammable.
- **Avoid oil-based creams.** Some lotions contain paraffin or oil which can react when used with oxygen therapy. Use a water-based cream such as KY Jelly.

Contact Numbers

Staffordshire/Cheshire patients www.baywater.co.uk.

Oxygen equipment queries: **Baywater** tel: 0800 373580

Cheshire East patients: uk.healthcare.airliquide.com

Oxygen equipment queries **Air Liquide** tel: 0800 637737

Prescription queries: **Respiratory Physiology** tel: 01782 675456

Test queries: **Respiratory Physiology** tel: 01782 675452

Please speak to a member of staff if you need this leaflet in large print, braille, audio or another language