



PHA Connects: COVID-19 and Your Health



Supplemental Oxygen Therapy

Low oxygen levels in the lungs can cause further narrowing of the blood vessels in your lungs, making it harder for blood to flow through your lungs. Your PH team might call this “an increase in resistance.” Supplemental oxygen can help some patients by relaxing the blood vessels in the lungs, which can improve how you feel. If prescribed by your PH team, supplemental oxygen use is just as important as the pills, inhaled or infused medications your PH team prescribes.

There are many different oxygen device options. Your health care team will work to balance oxygen flow and portability depending on your medical needs and insurance coverage. Follow up with your oxygen and insurance company so that you know which tests are required by your insurance company and how often these need to be completed. Insurance may dictate how frequently you need to be tested.

Oxygen Doses: Oxygen flow rates are described in liters of oxygen per minute (L/min); and generally range from 1-10 L/min for most patients. The clinic will perform an oxygen titration test to determine how much and when oxygen is needed. Very high oxygen flow rates can be challenging to deliver with standard equipment and can have unwanted effects on the lining of your nose and throat.

The goal is to keep my oxygen saturation level above: _____ %

Different devices offer different flow settings. Pulse flow technology or a conserving device detects when you are about to breathe in through your nose and delivers a dose of oxygen at the start of your breath. Continuous flow offers a constant, steady stream of oxygen. If your oxygen dose needs are high (5 L/min or more), pulse flow devices may not provide enough oxygen.

My Oxygen Therapy Recommendations

Activity	Oxygen Flow (liters per minute)	Delivery Device
At Rest		
Exercise		
Sleep		
Other		

Insurance Company: _____

Phone: _____

Oxygen Provider: _____

Phone: _____

Who manages/prescribes my oxygen: _____

Phone: _____

Traveling with Oxygen

- Obtain a letter from a health care professional. All PH patients planning air travel or travel to high altitude locations should discuss the possible need for oxygen with their PH specialist and obtain a letter describing their specific medical needs.
- Contact your airline(s). Each airline has different requirements for traveling with oxygen including medical forms that must be completed and the number of backup batteries required for an oxygen concentrator. Contact each airline you will use as far in advance of your trip as possible.
- Contact your oxygen provider to assist with getting an FAA-

approved oxygen concentrator and the required number of backup batteries.

- The Transportation Security Administration provides general information about flying with oxygen at [TSA.Gov/Travel/Special-Procedures](https://www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures).
- Pack enough backup batteries in your carry-on luggage according to the requirements of your airline. Ensure that batteries you have in your checked luggage are correctly packaged. The Department of Transportation prohibits loose lithium batteries in checked baggage.

