

Oxygen Administration*

Purpose: To help the resident breathe more easily by increasing the oxygen (O₂) available.

Materials:

1. Oxygen tank on carrier.
2. Gauge or regulator.
3. Humidifying bottle with sterile distilled water.
4. Mask or cannula and connecting tubing.

Procedure:

1. To prepare the tank—verify that the tank is coded and labeled as “oxygen.” Before the regulator is attached to a new tank, “crack” the tank. That is, open the valve and close quickly to blow out any dust or foreign matter which might be forced into the regulator. Since this is noisy, crack the tank near the storage area rather than in the resident’s room.
2. To attach the regulator to tank:
 - a. Hold regulator assembly upright when attaching.
 - b. Fill humidifying bottle with sterile distilled water to indicated level.
3. To start oxygen:
 - a. Leave oxygen tank securely fastened to cart and place in upright position while oxygen is administered.
 - b. With liter flow valve turned off, open tank valve completely. Then turn liter flow valve slowly until the steel ball, or liter flow needle, rises on the liter gauge to the liter number ordered by the doctor.
4. To use mask or cannula:
 - a. Connect plastic mask or cannula to the oxygen connecting tube and regulator.
 - b. Place mask or cannula on resident with oxygen flowing. Mask should cover the nose and mouth.
 - c. Persons with chronic respiratory disorders should receive oxygen at no more than 2L/minute. A cannula is usually used.
 - d. When using a mask, oxygen should be delivered at 5-6L/minute to assure CO₂ washout from mask.
5. To maintain oxygen therapy:
 - a. Distilled water should be kept at indicated level. If oxygen is not moistened, it is very damaging to the respiratory tract.
 - b. Do not allow water to flow into liter valve to prevent damage.
 - c. A shrill whistling may be caused by a kink in the tubing.
 - d. Mask or cannula, tubing and humidifying jar should be changed every 72 hours.
 - e. Give special care to skin under mask or cannula. Give mouth care regularly. Lubricate lips with water soluble moisturizer.
6. To discontinue oxygen:
 - a. Remove mask or cannula.

- b. Turn off oxygen tank, then liter valve.
- c. Record according to procedure.

Dangers: Oxygen *supports* combustion.

1. No smoking is allowed in room. Post signs where they may be easily seen.
2. All electrical equipment should be properly grounded.
3. Remove sources of static electricity.
4. Do not use oil based lubricants or solutions containing alcohol near oxygen administration.

Toxic Effects: Result from oxygen being supplied in greater amounts than the body needs.

Symptoms may include:

1. Dusky colored skin.
2. Bluish red fingernails.
3. Drowsiness.
4. Confusion.
5. Respiratory depression (dangerously slowed breathing).

Notify licensed nurse immediately if any of these symptoms occur!

* Some facilities have oxygen available through other means. Follow the directions of the facility's policy and procedure.