

Oxygen Safety

Oxygen can make breathing easier but it is important not to change the amount of oxygen (liter flow) you are getting without talking to your Hospice of Southern Kentucky nurse or physician. More doesn't always mean better and could be harmful!

The use of oxygen presents a fire risk so proper use is critical. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- **DO NOT SMOKE AROUND OXYGEN! SMOKING AROUND OXYGEN IS A SERIOUS THREAT TO SAFETY BECAUSE OXYGEN IS VERY FLAMMABLE.**
- Please "No Smoking – Oxygen in Use signs at the entrances to your home. If you need more than one, ask your hospice team to bring as many as you need.
- Keep all oxygen at least 10 feet from open flames including candles, space heaters, and stoves.
- Do not use petroleum-based products such as Vaseline, chapstick, lotions, or cream when using oxygen or handling oxygen equipment.
- Ideally, store oxygen tanks in a secured upright position in a well-ventilated area. If this is not possible, you can place the oxygen tanks flat on their side in a well-ventilated area. Do not store oxygen tanks in a confined area such as a closet or under a bed.
- Do not use alcohol or alcohol-based products around oxygen.
- Do not use aerosol sprays around oxygen.
- Use the shortest length of oxygen tubing possible to prevent trip hazards.
- Change the nasal cannula every two weeks.
- Wear cotton clothing or use cotton sheets on the bed to reduce static electricity and sparks.
- Avoid using electrical objects such as hair dryers or electric blankets.
- Clean the filter in the oxygen concentrator monthly, or when it's visibly dirty.
- Have a fire plan with an escape route.
- Have smoke detectors and a fire extinguisher in your home.