

# Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

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## **What is Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy?**

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBO therapy) is a medical treatment that helps treat many different medical conditions. It involves breathing 100% oxygen while in a pressurized chamber.

## **How does it affect healing?**

The pressure in the Hyperbaric Chamber increases the oxygen that your lungs take in. From the lungs, the oxygen is then absorbed into the blood. This stimulates the release of stem cells and growth factors that increase healing and fight infection.

## **How long are the treatments?**

The treatments last about 90 minutes. They generally are scheduled once a day, 5 days a week. You can have 25 or more treatments before the HBO therapy is complete. How many treatments you have is often dependent on your rate of healing.

Please notify the staff immediately if you have a cold or other illness such as high blood pressure, fever, frequent loose stools and any flu-like symptoms – fever, nausea, runny nose, or sore throat. Any of these symptoms may delay your treatment until the symptoms have disappeared.

## **How should I prepare for HBO therapy?**

- Eat a good meal prior to each session
- Take any prescribed medications

- Wear cotton socks and cotton underwear
- Bring books and magazines (no newspapers)

It is very important to maintain good hygiene and health during the treatments.

Please notify the staff immediately if you have a cold or other illness such as high blood pressure, fever, frequent loose stools and/or any flu-like symptoms (fever, nausea, runny nose, or sore throat). We may pause your treatments temporarily until symptoms have disappeared.

### **What do I need to avoid?**

Below is a list of items you cannot wear or bring to your treatment. For the safety of everyone during treatment, the following items are **not** allowed during HBO therapy:

- Ace wraps
- Alcohol products, hairspray or hair products, makeup, lipstick, perfume, makeup, deodorant, aftershave, lotions, glycerin
- Petroleum or glycerin products - creams, oils, Vaseline-based products, certain wound ointments and dressings
- Adhesives or Velcro
- Jewelry, watches, earrings, rings, necklaces, bracelets, ID emergency bracelets
- Ink pens.
- Hearing aids, electronic devices, cellphones, pagers, iPads, or any products containing batteries
- Hand warmers
- Hard contact lenses
- Cigarettes, cigars, lighters, matches, or any tobacco products or ignition sources
- Newspapers

- Shoes
- Thermoses, flasks (water will be provided)

### **What foods should I avoid before therapy?**

- You may want to avoid foods that could cause gas.
- Do not drink caffeinated beverages (coffee, tea, cola, etc.) 4 hours before treatment. Caffeine decreases the maximum therapy benefit because it causes narrowing of blood vessels.

### **What medications should I avoid?**

Oxygen may change the effects of certain medications. While you are receiving HBO therapy **you must avoid taking** the following medications:

- Bleomycin
- Sulfamylon
- Cisplatin
- Disuriram (Antibuse®)
- Doxorubicin
- All medication patches
- Certain ointments used for treating wounds

You may take vitamin E over the course of the treatment. This can help prevent absorbing too much Oxygen.

### **What can I expect on the day of treatment with HBO therapy?**

Please arrive at least 30-45 minutes before your appointment and park directly in front of the Wound Care Clinic or across the road.

- Before going into the chamber for treatment, we will ask you to change into scrubs. You may wear 100% cotton or 50/50 blend underwear and cotton socks (no shoes).
- Make sure you use the restroom before the treatment.

- We will take your temperature, blood pressure and pulse.
- If you have diabetes, we will check your blood sugar before and after the treatment.
- If you are not diabetic, we will check your blood sugar prior to and after the first three treatments.
- For your safety and the safety of others in therapy with you, a staff member will check your person for any banned items.
- The temperature inside the chamber will be warm on the way down and cold on the way up. We will provide you with one blanket, if requested.
- Do not hold your breath at any time during your treatment.
- During therapy, you will put on lightweight, clear hood. This is the method used to deliver oxygen. If you are claustrophobic, please let your provider, nurse and/or technician know.
- While at home, bandage your wound as directed by your provider.

### **What does it feel like?**

Some people say the start of treatment feels like flying in an airplane. As the pressure builds, so does the pressure in your ears. Your ears will feel like they are going to pop.

### **How will I relieve pressure in my ears?**

- Plug your nose, close your mouth and act like you are blowing your nose.
- Drink water
- Swallow
- Chew gum (will be provided)
- Yawn

Report any difficulty in clearing the pressure in your ears to an attendant

## **What dressings can I use for the treatment?**

Prior to your treatment, apply wound dressing as directed by your health care provider. A Hydrogel or Normal saline moist dressing may be used during treatment. If there is greater than minimal drainage, you may be using a foam dressing. Ace wraps are not allowed during treatment.

## **What are the side effects?**

You might have any of the following signs and symptoms:

- Feeling tired
- Pain in your ears or sinuses and possibly fluid in your ears
- Anxiety, due to feeling confined in the chamber
- Vision changes. This will go away over the course of treatment
- Numbness in your fingers. This will go away over the course of treatment
- With increased pressure and breathing 100% oxygen, you may also feel woozy or even giddy
- Seizures, because of too much oxygen. This is very rare
- Collapsed lung with shortness of breath. This also is very rare
- Increase in the progression of cataracts

## **Can I use tobacco while I receive HBO therapy?**

Tobacco decreases the maximum therapy benefit, because nicotine causes narrowing of blood vessels. If you are not able to quit smoking or chewing tobacco completely we recommend that you refrain from using tobacco at least 2-3 hours prior treatment and 2-3 hours after treatment.

## **Who is not allowed to have HBO therapy?**

- Pregnant women
- People with pulmonary blebs

- Individuals with cataract surgery with lens implants less than 3 months old
- Those with insulin pumps may not be able to receive HBO therapy.

Please discuss these situations with your provider.

## **What are my discharge instructions?**

Call 911 for immediate help if you are having trouble breathing or chest pain

Please contact our office at 734-936-9795 if you have any of the following

- Headache not relieved with over-the-counter medication
- Severe pain in your ears
- Nausea or vomiting
- any other concerns

After hours your call will be transferred to hospital paging and you will be routed to a doctor on-call.

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