

Carers Equipment Safety Card – The Portable Oxygen Concentrator

Portable oxygen concentrators (POCs) allow for the safe supply of oxygen in the home.



1. Features:

- Can be plugged into standard power supply.
- Are supplied with an adaptor so that they can be powered while driving.
- Include rechargeable batteries.
- Lightweight and portable.

2. Use:

- Lubricate cannula with water based lubricant, then insert into nostrils.
- Loop tubes from cannula over the ears and bring down under the chin.
- Adjust the clasp to maintain the position of the cannula.
- Change nasal prongs as required.

3. Safety:

- Place as far away from heaters as possible.
- ANYTHING likely to cause sparks or flames must be removed from the immediate area such as:
 - * matches
 - * cigarettes
 - * Electrical equipment e.g. electric razor
 - * clockwork toys
- Display “**No Smoking**” sign on the cylinder
- Be careful not to trip or get cord caught on furniture.

4. Cleaning:

- Follow instructions provided with the unit.
- Tubing must be checked for blockages regularly and changed as necessary.

5. Who should use a portable oxygen concentrator?

This can be due to many reasons, including:

- shortness of breath
- post surgery

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Purpose: To provide information that reinforces the **education and training** provided by nursing or support staff to assist carers to be able to safely use the portable oxygen concentrator.

Frequently asked Questions:

1/ What do I do for sore ears because of the tubing?

There are products available to pad the tubing – talk to your nurse or GP.

2/ Can I attach a mask to my concentrator?

No – unless advised by your health professional

3/ What is the best treatment for a dry nose?

Water based gels – ask your pharmacist for advice. Don't use anything unless you have checked that they are safe.

4/ What do I do if my nose is blocked?

- * Use a water based gel as described above.
- * Adhesive strips will often keep nostrils open without need for medication.
- * Contact your GP or nurse if there are continual problems.

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1. If you don't feel confident, have any difficulty assisting with this or have any concerns, please let nursing or support staff know.
 2. If this equipment is faulty or damaged in anyway please let nursing or support staff know.
 3. Please contact the Community Palliative Care Service if you have any concerns.

Reference: Dept of Respiratory Medicine, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Nov 2007.

Disclaimer: The Community Palliative Care Service and all persons involved in producing this information sheet will not be held responsible for any adverse event or loss from the implementation of all or part of this information. All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the item this information sheet pertains to, is maintained to a high safety standard.

Please return this card to the Community Palliative Care Service when no longer required.