

Patient Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Instruction Guide for Patients: Oxygen Therapy**

### **What Is Oxygen Therapy?**

Oxygen therapy supplies extra oxygen to help fuel brain and muscle cells and ease the workload of the heart. Oxygen therapy may help you breathe better and will also help you to feel better and improve memory, sleep, mood and alertness.

### **Oxygen Must Be Prescribed By Your Doctor**

Oxygen is a medication and must be taken as prescribed by your doctor. The oxygen flow rate must never be changed from that which your doctor prescribed. Your doctor is the only one who can prescribe any changes in the oxygen flow rate. Oxygen may be ordered for you during sleep, during exercise or continuously.

**Specific oxygen instructions for me are** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Is Your Home Safe for Oxygen Use?**

While oxygen by itself does not cause fires, it can cause a fire to spread faster. This can result in serious burns and injuries to you and/or your loved ones. It can cause serious damage to you or your neighbors' homes.

**Answer these simple questions to see if you are at a higher risk for dangerous fires:**

- Do you or anyone else smoke in your home? Where?
- Are there other fire risks in your home? Open flames, candles, appliances that cause shocks?
- Does your home have smoke detectors that work? Have the batteries been replaced recently?
- Does your home have a working fire extinguisher? Do you know how to operate it?

### **Think Safety First!**

- Do not smoke or allow others to smoke in the room where oxygen is used or stored.
- Keep oxygen equipment away from radiators, heat ducts or any other sources of heat.
- Stay at least ten feet away from gas stoves, lighted fireplaces, candles, or other sources of heat or open flame. Do not use an electric razor or hair dryers/blowers (it's a possible source of sparks.)
- Do not use flammable products such as aerosol sprays, oil-based lubricants or lotions (such as Vaseline or Chap Stick), rubbing alcohol, nail polish remover or paint thinners.
- Do not use polyester/nylon bed linens or clothing. These can create static electricity which can possibly start a fire.
- Keep your oxygen tank in a stand to prevent tipping, or placed on its side on the floor. Oxygen must be kept in a well-ventilated area in your home, *not* in a closed closet. Placement under a bed could be acceptable provided there are no bed coverings that occlude airflow and no heat source under the bed. It should *not* be stored under an electric bed or in outdoor areas such as an open porch or deck.

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***When traveling, keep oxygen on its side in the back seat, never in the trunk of your car.***

- Extended length oxygen tubing poses a tripping hazard. Extra care must be taken while walking.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher at home. Install a smoke detector and test it at least twice a year. Have a well-rehearsed evacuation plan in the event of a fire. Tell the fire department that you keep oxygen at home. It is important to post an “Oxygen in Use” sign provided by your oxygen supplier.
- In the event of fire, turn your oxygen off immediately and leave your home.
- Never attempt to repair or lubricate equipment yourself, and never allow untrained people to adjust your equipment.

### **Tips for Safe Use of Oxygen Equipment**

- Wash your hands for at least 15 seconds before handling your equipment.
- Keep oxygen tubing uncovered from bedding and free from other objects.
- Prevent skin irritation from tubing. Tuck gauze pads behind your ears and against your cheeks. If you have persistent redness under your nose, call your doctor.
- Only use a water-based lubricant to moisten your lips or nostrils. Never use an oil-based product such as petroleum jelly (Vaseline) or lip balm (Chap Stick).
- Turn the oxygen off when not in use.
- Consider a Personal Emergency Response System if you live alone or are at home alone for any length of time.
- Let your local fire department and utility company know that you have oxygen in your home.

PSEG Customer Assistance Center: (800) 490-0025

[www.psegliny.com](http://www.psegliny.com) Critical Care Fax 631-844-3635

National Grid/Gas Emergency: (800) 490-0045

- Order more oxygen from your dealer at least 3 days before you’ll need it.

**My oxygen dealer is** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

Notes and Questions for my doctor or nurse: \_\_\_\_\_

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