

Oxygen Safety

Your hospice care team may provide you or your loved one with oxygen to help you breathe better. Oxygen is very effective and easy to use. However, you must be extremely careful with your oxygen because it can cause a fire or even an explosion.

Follow these tips for safe oxygen usage:

1. Never smoke while using oxygen.

This is the number one cause of fires that occur while using oxygen. Do not smoke or let anyone else smoke inside your home if you have an oxygen tank.

2. Keep the oxygen tank away from anything that may spark or light a fire.

Keep it away from radiators, stoves, water heaters, pilot lights, heaters, or electronic devices like a hair dryer, electric razor, or electric toys. Be extra careful in the kitchen and bathroom, where many of these electronic or heating items are located.

3. Avoid oil and grease.

Take care that oily or greasy liquids do not spill on or near the oxygen tank. Also, avoid having oily or greasy liquids on your face near the oxygen mask.

4. Be aware of tubing.

Oxygen tanks come with long lines of tubing so you can move around while keeping the oxygen in a safe spot. Be careful not to trip, and point out tubing to others, such as visiting family members or children, so they don't trip.

5. Store oxygen safely in open-air space

Do not put an oxygen tank inside a closet or chest. Make sure it is somewhere where air around it can move freely. Never store your oxygen tank under a bed, in a car, near flammable materials or under clothing, bedding, or other items. Never have your cylinders standing upright without a tank stand. Your cylinders should be secured in a storage rack or stand or lying down. This prevents oxygen from building up in a single spot, which can cause a fire or explosion.