



Home Medical Equipment: Oxygen

The neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) team celebrates with you as your baby goes home! After graduation from the NICU, your baby will need special home medical equipment (also called durable medical equipment) to help keep him or her well.

Why does my baby need this equipment?

- Oxygen is a gas that provides energy for every organ in the body. Room air is 21% oxygen.
- Oxygen is also a drug and must be ordered by a doctor or nurse practitioner.
- Extra oxygen from the nasal cannula will help your baby breathe easier, feed better, and grow.
- You will be going home with an pulse oximeter (pulse or oxygen saturation monitor).

Vendor Information

A company, also called a vendor, will bring the equipment to your home and teach you how to use and manage any problems with the equipment that may arise.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Other Emergency Numbers: _____

Important Things to Remember

- Complete cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) teaching, as well as monitor and equipment training.
- Stay overnight with your baby—use the equipment you will be going home with and care for your baby for at least 24 to 48 hours before going home.
- Prepare for a smoke-free home, so that your baby can breathe easy.
- Do not let anyone smoke in the house, the car, or anywhere around your baby or the oxygen tanks.
- Oxygen burns easily. It cannot be around an open flame. Keep the oxygen tanks and tubing at least 6 to 10 feet away from candles, fire or burners, radiators, fireplaces, or heaters.
- Do not use grease, oil, rubbing alcohol, powders, petroleum jelly, or spray cans near your baby on oxygen or the equipment.
- Keep the door to the baby's room open.
- Use stands to keep the oxygen tanks on a flat surface. Be careful that the tanks don't tip over on anyone.
- Call your emergency medical services, telephone, and electric companies to let them know that your baby uses a pulse oximeter (pulse ox or oxygen saturation monitor). This is important so that if there is a power outage or emergency, you will be on a priority list for help.
- Always check your baby when you hear the pulse monitor alarm. If your baby is blue or having breathing problems, be sure the oxygen tank is on, that oxygen is flowing out of the cannula, and that prongs are in your baby's nose. If your baby is not breathing, shout for help, start CPR, and call emergency medical services (EMS) or 911 right away.

The above information is to help you better understand your baby's care. Always follow the instructions given by your baby's health-care provider and ask questions if you have concerns about your baby.

Online Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org