

Information for Consumers: Domiciliary Oxygen Program (DOP) Frequently Asked Questions



[To use an interpreter over the telephone – Phone 131 450](tel:131450)

State-wide Equipment Program

What is the Domiciliary Oxygen Program?

A State-wide program that provides subsidised oxygen equipment to eligible clients who qualify to receive funding.

Am I eligible for funding?

You may be eligible for funding if you are a permanent resident of Victoria and have a permanent or long-term disability, or are frail aged, and are not eligible for any other funding options and are living independently in the community.

A SWEP application form allows SWEP to determine your eligibility.

How do I apply for funding?

You will need to have an assessment by a Respiratory Physician who will be able to complete a prescription form on your behalf.

Your doctor will need to certify that your disability is Permanent, or long term, or that you are Frail Aged.

How do I find a Respiratory Physician?

You should be referred to a respiratory physician by your GP.

What is the subsidy level?

Supply is based on your respiratory physician's assessment and various packages may be funded to a maximum of \$200 per month.

What can be provided by D.O.P?

After being assessed, your medical specialist will determine the best equipment to meet your needs. An oxygen concentrator is a common method of providing oxygen. Oxygen can also be provided via pre-filled cylinders via an oxygen conserving device (OCD). You will also receive a number of accessories for use with your oxygen equipment. This can include nasal cannula, tubing and swivel connectors, a trolley and/or a carry bag (portable cylinders only).

What is the process once my assessment has been completed?

1. If you are not known to SWEP you will be required to complete an application form, which your doctor will need to sign.
2. The Respiratory Physician will complete the application form with you.
3. All documentation is submitted to SWEP at which time you receive a letter to inform you of the status of your application
4. Your application is reviewed by Consultant Respiratory Physician to the Department of Human Services
5. On approval your application will be processed.

What do I do if the equipment I am using breaks down?

Call Air Liquide Healthcare on 1300 36 02 02 or SWEP on 1300 747 937 and one of the SWEP staff will arrange the repair for you.

What should I do when I no longer require the equipment I have from SWEP?

SWEP requires your Physician to notify us in writing that you no longer require your equipment. SWEP will arrange for the equipment to be returned to Air Liquide Healthcare.

What do I do if I run out of oxygen or the power goes off?

Don't be concerned. Have the number of your oxygen supplier readily available in case you run out or the machine is faulty.

Most people on oxygen can cope without oxygen for many hours if they rest.

You should register with your phone and electricity providers that you have a concentrator at home to ensure that your services are reinstated quickly.

Can I smoke whilst using home oxygen?

No. If you are smoking your oxygen therapy funding will cease.

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How much oxygen should I use?

Your Specialist Physician will prescribe the flow and amount of time per day you need to use your oxygen.

When do I use my equipment?

Portable oxygen is used when doing physical exertion, such as walking and for attending outings such as doctor's appointments. If you have both cylinders and concentrator at home, the concentrator should be used for physical exertion within the house and the portable oxygen used outside the house.

How can I tell if I am getting enough oxygen?

The only way to tell is to have a test when you are wearing your supplemental oxygen e.g. a six minute walk test. If new symptoms appear, such as increased sleepiness, morning headaches and confusion, you may be receiving too much oxygen. Contact your respiratory nurse or physician.

Can I increase my oxygen flow if I get more breathless?

No. Oxygen is a prescription drug; you should not change the flow rate prior to checking with your nurse or physician. You may need to have another blood test or walk test to decide if you need more oxygen.

Can I cook whilst using oxygen

No. It is not safe to use your oxygen within 2 metres of an open flame.

Can I drive a car whilst using oxygen?

Yes. Ensure that the oxygen cylinder is securely stored within the car in case of an accident.

Can I become addicted to oxygen?

No. Oxygen is not addictive and used properly prolongs life.

Can I have a bath or shower whilst using oxygen?

Yes. The oxygen tubing can get wet but ensure that the oxygen concentrator or cylinder remains dry.

Who moves my concentrator if I move from one place to another?

Your family or friends.

What do I do for sore ears due to the tubing?

Pad the tubing with soft material to reduce the tubing rubbing.

Will my electricity bill increase?

Yes. Electricity companies provide a concession. Your electricity company can provide you with a concession form which needs to be signed by your respiratory physician or nurse.

Can I go on holidays with oxygen?

Yes. It is safe to travel with oxygen, however, various transports have different regulations about their use with oxygen. Contact the appropriate business (airport, boat, train, bus) about their regulations well in advance of your holiday.

Contact Air Liquide Healthcare on 1300 36 02 02 at least two weeks in advance to going on holiday to ensure that arrangements for your oxygen supply can be arranged before you leave. Carry the contact numbers of your Specialist and Air Liquide Depots; you never know when you might need them.

How can I provide feedback?

If you wish to provide feedback about any aspect of SWEP, you should contact SWEP and speak to the relevant Program Manager.

If the matter cannot be resolved you may wish to pursue the issue by following the SWEP grievance and complaint procedure on our website.