

# OXYGEN THERAPY AT THE BRIGHTWELL

## WHAT IS OXYGEN THERAPY?

The air you normally breath consists of 21% oxygen, 78% nitrogen and the remaining 1% is comprised of carbon dioxide and noble gases.

Oxygen Therapy is breathing higher dose oxygen, over 98%, inside a pressurised chamber.

You experience atmospheric pressure everyday and the extra pressure you will feel is small, no more than what you feel in a commercial aeroplane.



## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Oxygen is often taken for granted but it has a massive effect on the healing process. The cells in our body use oxygen to transfer the energy stored in food to a usable form.

With a neurological condition like Multiple Sclerosis, where your **immune system is attacking your own central nervous** system, much of that energy is consumed by this struggle leaving other cells lacking the energy needed to heal and regenerate.

Breathing a higher concentration of oxygen can give these cells the extra boost they need. The additional benefit of being at pressure forces your blood to absorb more oxygen.

Recent clinical trials have suggested that oxygen therapy is also of benefit in **reducing inflammation and pain perception**. Wahl, Bidstrup, Werner Et.al., in the *Journal of Pain Research*, showed that just one session of oxygen therapy provided anti-inflammatory and analgesic effects.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN OXYGEN SESSION?

Oxygen therapy is simple and non-invasive, you will be seated in a purpose built chamber with others. To maintain social distancing we have limited the chamber to just four people and outside the chamber are two trained operators. You will enter the Centre wearing your oxygen mask and once in the chamber you then attach the supply and exhaust pipes. The whole time you are in the chamber you will be on a separate air supply to everyone else. The session is conducted in three stages;

### COMPRESSION

After the chamber door is closed there will be some noise as air is added and the pressure increased. It will get warmer and you will feel a fullness in your ears, similar to when an aeroplane descends. You may need to equalise your ears to avoid any discomfort.

### BREATHING OXYGEN

You'll start breathing higher dose oxygen as soon as the chamber door is closed and you'll receive oxygen for 1 hour. Of this time 45 minutes will be at pressure.

All you need to do is breathe normally.

### DECOMPRESSION

Your operator will let you know that the session is complete .

The chamber will then be depressurised which may again require you to equalise your ears.

You will continue to wear your mask but you will be breathing normal air.

# HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR OXYGEN THERAPY



Before you begin oxygen therapy expect to commit to an initial course of between 15 to 20 sessions, this will usually consist of 1 session per day, over the course of 5 days for 3 or 4 weeks.

Your first sessions will start at the lowest pressure, P2, working up to the highest level at a pace you feel comfortable with.

Occasionally it isn't feasible to attend every day and in those instances we will work with you to organise as many sessions, as close together as possible, to help maximise the potential effectiveness of your therapy.

When you are in the chamber wear comfortable, loose fitting clothes. Some of our members find it beneficial to wear layers as the chamber can become quite warm during the course of a session.

When the pressure increases in the chamber you will need to equalise your ears just as you would do on an aeroplane. There are a number of ways to do this;

- Swallow; this is usually the most effective method
- Blowing your nose, while holding it and your mouth closed
- Move your jaw from side to side, then forward and back
- Try to force a yawn
- Taking sips of water; you will need to bring a plastic bottle of still water with you

Don't worry if you can't clear your ears at first, let the operator know straight away and they will slow, or stop, the pressurisation. There will always be an operator available to help.

As you are wearing your mask for the entirety of the session it will be difficult to talk and the noise will make it tricky to hear. Most people, during the session, listen to something through their headphones or read a book to keep themselves entertained.

You can bring your mobile phone, tablet or laptop into the chamber; there is free Wi-Fi, but we do recommend you download any programmes you'd like to watch beforehand.

If you have any questions, Angela, or any other team member will be happy to help.

KEY TO PRESSURES		
P 2	1.5 ata	
P 3	1.75 ata	
P 4	2 ata	
Normal atmospheric pressure = 1 ata (atmospheres absolute)		

Timetable valid from **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020**, call 01454 201 686 to book

	09:00	10:45	12:30	14:15	16:00
MONDAY	P 3	P 3	P 4	P 2	P 4
TUESDAY	P 4	P 4	P 3	P 4	P 4
WEDNESDAY	P 4	P 3	P 3	P 4	P 4
THURSDAY	P 4	P 2	P 3	P 4	P 3
FRIDAY	P 2	P 4	P 3	P 4	P 4

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT OXYGEN THERAPY

Under proper supervision the risks of oxygen therapy are very minimal. The most common side effect is ear pain and users are monitored closely for this. Other side effects may include;

- **Otic Barotrauma (pain in the ears or sinuses):** Some people may experience pain in their ears or sinuses. If you are not able to equalize your ears or sinuses, the pressurisation will be slowed or halted, and suitable remedies will be advised. **Please note** - should you be suffering from a cold or other condition affecting your sinuses, you are advised for your own comfort, to avoid coming for oxygen therapy until the condition has cleared up. This will also help to ensure that Centre members with compromised immune systems are not put at risk
- **Serous Otitis:** Fluid in the ears sometimes accumulates because of breathing high concentrations of oxygen. It may occasionally feel like having a "pillow over the ear." This disappears soon after therapy ceases and can often be eased with decongestants.
- **Visual Changes: blurring, worsening of near-sightedness [myopia], temporary improvement in far-sightedness [presbyopia]:** After 20 or more oxygen sessions, especially for those over 40 years old, some people may experience a change in their vision. This is usually temporary, and, in most people, vision returns to its pre-therapy level about six weeks after the cessation of therapy. It is not advisable to get a new prescription for glasses or contact lenses until at least eight weeks after your final oxygen session.
- **Cataracts:** Individuals with cataracts have, very occasionally, had a maturing or ripening of the cataract(s).
- **Cerebral Air Embolism and Pneumothorax:** Whenever there is a rapid change in ambient pressure, there is the possibility of rupture of the lungs with escape of air into the arteries or into the chest cavity outside the lungs. This can only occur if the normal passage of air out of the lungs is blocked during decompression. The rate of decompression in our oxygen sessions is very slow to avoid this possibility. It is important that you breathe normally during treatment and do not hold your breath.
- **Fatigue:** Some people may subjectively feel fatigue following therapy, but this is not a consistent finding.

## Allergies

Some oxygen masks, hoods or the seals used at the Centre may contain latex or other allergic materials. If you have any allergies please advise a member of the oxygen team and we will source a suitable alternative.

## Consent

When you sign the membership form on page 32 you agree the following;

'I have read and understood the potential side-effects of oxygen therapy. I will abide by any instructions given by the chamber operator prior to and during the session to ensure that the therapy is safe and comfortable for both myself and other members.'



# the brightwell

a centre for neurological wellbeing & physical recovery

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