



MONITOR OXYGEN LEVELS AT HOME



WHAT IS A PULSE OXIMETER?

A Pulse Oximeter is a small device that when placed on your finger will show numbers indicating your blood oxygen level and heart rate.



WHY SHOULD I CHECK MY OXYGEN LEVEL?

When patients are recovering from COVID-19 and have underlying health conditions, it's recommended they monitor their pulse oxygen levels at home.

Checking your oxygen levels at home can provide reassurance as symptoms of shortness of breath can change during your illness. Monitoring for drops in your levels can help you to know when to reach out to your healthcare provider for help or care.

We know that in some patients with COVID-19 the virus can affect their lungs. It's not clear why, but some of these patients have low oxygen levels without having changes in their breathing. A drop in oxygen levels can be an early warning sign before symptoms develop or get worse.



HOW TO USE A PULSE OXIMETER

- Take readings indoors, while sitting at rest, limited movement and breathing is at a comfortable level.
- Avoid talking for a few minutes before testing
- Apply the device to your index or middle finger.
- Device should fit securely to finger.
- Make sure display screen faces up.
- Observe readings for **30-60** seconds before recording your most common reading.
- Measure and record **2-3** times per day.
- Remove nail polish from testing finger.
- If your hands are cold, warm them prior to testing.



** Note: Some medical conditions, such as Raynaud's, can make it difficult to obtain a pulse oximetry reading.*



WHAT DO I DO IF MY LEVEL DROPS?

If your number drops, check with your health care provider. Most patients with COVID-19 need to maintain an oxygen **level of 93% or higher**. Patients that have an underlying lung disease may already have a lower oxygen level and use home oxygen. It's also important for them to monitor at home and report a drop from their normal levels.



WHAT ABOUT OTHER SYMPTOMS?

The key to taking care of yourself at home with COVID-19 is to monitor all your symptoms. If you choose to use a pulse oximeter, do not rely on it as the only measure of your condition. Be sure to contact your health care provider if you are experiencing worsening symptom like weakness, confusion, chest pain, fever, increased cough, congestion, or shortness of breath regardless of your oxygen level.

Monitoring your blood oxygen level at home is just one of the ways to better manage your health!



THINGS TO REMEMBER

It's possible to get false readings from an oximeter. **Small things like wearing dark colored nail polish, false nails or cold hands can throw off a reading.**

It's important to track your levels and to not react to a single reading.



HOW DO I GET A HOME PULSE OXIMETER?

If you don't have a home pulse oximeter and would like to begin monitoring, please see the options below:

- You can obtain a pulse oximeter at your local pharmacy or online at Amazon.com, prices vary and can range between \$20-\$40.
- If you are **unable to afford** one, but are interested in learning more, email the address below for more information: careteam@coastalmedical.com



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