How do I prepare for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy?

Specific preparations will be reviewed with you in detail by your hyperbaric nurse or technician, so be sure to ask questions.

• Arrive 15 minutes prior to treatment time.
• Be sure to eat before arriving. Diabetics’ blood sugar must be 120 or above prior to treatment.
• Take any prescribed pain or anti-anxiety medications before leaving home or prior to arrival.
• Stop Smoking! Smoking restricts blood vessels and limits blood and oxygen delivery to tissues.
• Notify the nurse or technician if you have symptoms of a cold, flu, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, headaches, diarrhea or generalized body aches. These symptoms may require a temporary delay in your treatment. Call the clinic and discuss these symptoms with the hyperbaric nurse or technician.
• No fabrics other than 100% cotton are allowed. Gowns or Scrubs will be provided for you. No personal clothing may be worn inside the hyperbaric chamber.

Strict Safety Standards

The following items are NOT ALLOWED in the chamber.

Shoes
Matches or Lighters
Cigarettes
Velcro
Jewelry, Watches or Coins
Reading Materials
Any device with an external battery (hearing aids, temporary pacemakers, radios, etc.)
Prosthetic Devices
Hand or Foot Warmers
Thermal Patches
Mustache Wax
Scalp Preparations
Ointments

Makeup
Hair Oil
Wigs
Liniment
Perfume/Cologne
Lipstick
Hair Spray
Hair Pieces
Alcohol- or Petroleum-based Products
Aftershave
Nail Polish
Deodorant
Non-gas permeable Contact Lenses
What is Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy?

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy is a medical treatment performed with high-pressure oxygen, which aids in the process of healing wounds or damaged tissues. The treatment happens while you lie in a pressurized chamber in which you will breathe 100% oxygen.

The benefit of hyperbaric oxygen therapy results from an oxygen-enriched bloodstream, not from direct contact of oxygen with the wound.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy can provide you with one or more of these benefits:

• Advanced wound healing
• Increased Oxygen delivery to injured tissue
• Preservation of damaged tissue
• Greater blood vessel formation
• Improved infection control
• Elimination of toxic substances
• Salvation of surgical incision sites

How many Treatments will I need?

The treatment plan is tailored to each patient, and the number of treatments will be based on your individual needs. Some emergency cases require only a few treatments. Other patients may require 30-60 treatments, during which the healing effect is gradual. The hyperbaric team will review your case with you. The treatments are administered once a day, five days per week, lasting two hours each.

Will I have any side effects?

Generally you will not experience any side effects. Some patients do report a “crackling” sensation in their ears between treatments. This can be relieved the same way you clear your ears during the treatment. If the crackling continues, report this to your hyperbaric nurse or technician.

In rare cases, patients have developed temporary changes in their vision. Studies show that vision returns to pretreatment levels within six to eight weeks after treatment ends.

As with all medical treatment, hyperbaric oxygen therapy presents some risks. These are rare, and they will be discussed with you before you consent to therapy.

What will my treatment be like?

The treatment occurs while you lie inside the chamber and nap or watch TV. The treatment is painless, although at times you may experience a sensation of fullness in your ears, similar to what you may experience while driving in the mountains or flying. The fullness occurs as your eardrums respond to the change in pressure. Before your treatment begins, the hyperbaric technician or nurse will teach you how to relieve this pressure and avoid ear discomfort. Your hyperbaric nurse or technician will adjust the rate of compression according to your tolerance level and will be there to talk you through the procedures.

During the compression period, you may notice an increase in the chamber temperature. This phase of the treatment usually lasts 10-15 minutes. Once the chamber reaches the prescribed pressure level, you will no longer feel the fullness in your ears. You may nap, watch TV or listen to music during the remainder of the treatment, which will last two hours.

Near the end of your treatment, the pressure will gradually decrease to normal over a period of 10-15 minutes. You may feel a “popping” sensation in your ears that is normal during this period.