



Smoking in homes where people use oxygen starts fires each year that cause deaths and injuries to patients, family members, neighbors, and pets.

These fires force whole families and other building tenants out of their homes, destroy a lifetime's possessions, and cause hundreds of thousands of dollars in property damage.

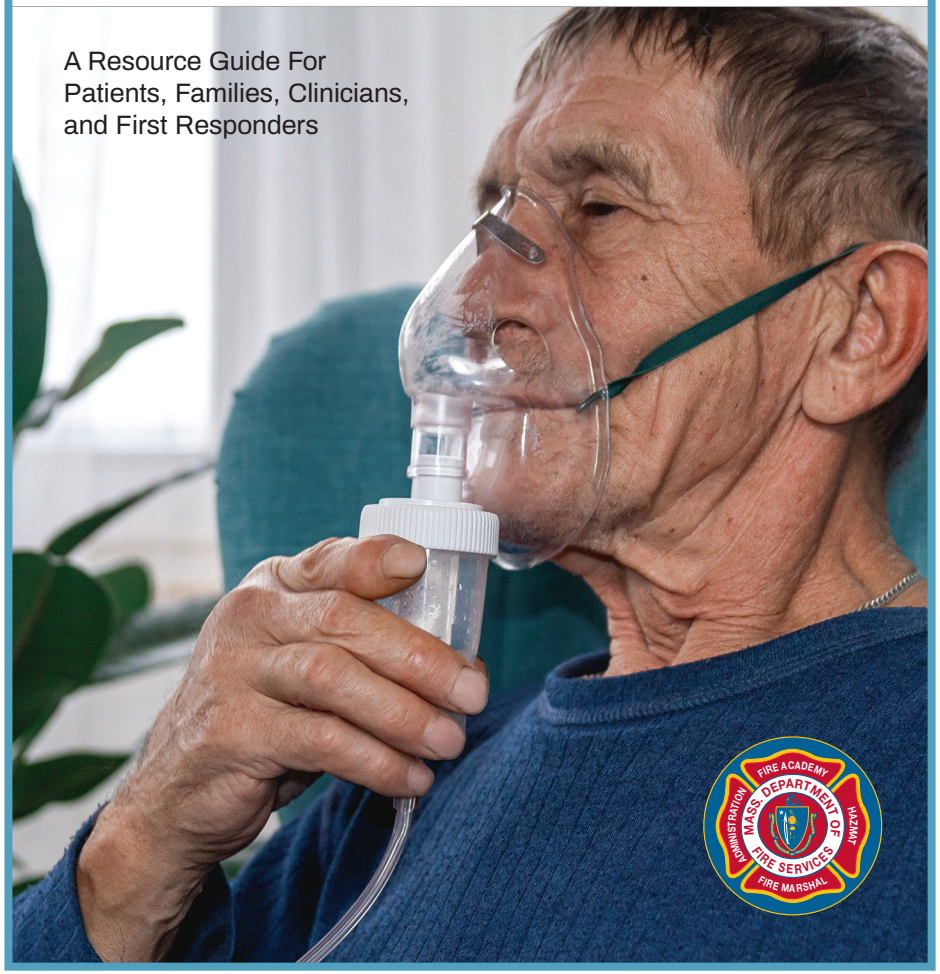
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Using Home Oxygen Safely

A Resource Guide For Patients, Families, Clinicians, and First Responders



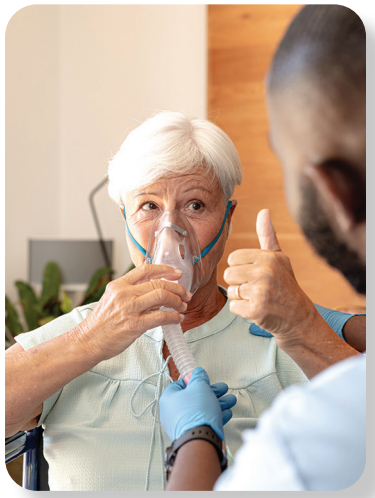
For Patients and Families

Using home oxygen increases the risk of fires and burn injuries. Smoking is the #1 cause of home oxygen fires.

When oxygen is used at home, it can saturate your hair, clothing, and furniture. Fires will start more easily, spread faster, and burn hotter.

When using home oxygen, learn how to handle it safely. Keep home oxygen and tubing away from open flames, sparks, and heat sources such as:

- Tobacco and cannabis products
- Lighters and matches
- Candles and incense
- Gas stoves and grills
- Hair dryers
- Heating equipment



Avoid using cosmetics and other products that contain flammable ingredients such as oils, grease, petroleum, and acetone (nail polish remover).

For Clinicians

Fire needs oxygen to burn. Home oxygen can create an oxygen-rich environment in your patient's home. Fires can start in many ways, but smoking is the leading cause of home oxygen fires.

Smoking on home oxygen poses a particular danger of severe and even fatal burn injuries. These fires can easily spread and put everyone in the building at risk.

Home Fire Safety

Your family should help make sure your home has working smoke alarms.

Make and practice a home escape plan with your family.

Encourage and help your patients to quit smoking. Help them understand the severe risk of fire and injury associated with smoking on home oxygen.

Smoking is a personal health hazard and can be a public safety risk. Clinicians and patients can find more information on tobacco cessation resources at **www.mass.gov/quitting**.

Smoking on Home Oxygen is Especially Dangerous

No one should smoke in your home. The fire danger is too great.

- You should not smoke.
- Your family and friends should not smoke around you.

Quitting is the best thing you can do for your health and safety. If you must smoke:

- Disconnect the oxygen.
- Wait 10 minutes.
- Go outside to smoke.
- Extinguish smoking materials in a heavy ashtray with water or sand.

This gives the oxygen time to come off your hair and clothes into the open air. This is not a safe way to smoke but is less risky than smoking indoors.

Need Help to Quit Smoking?

There is FREE help for you! The **Massachusetts Tobacco and Nicotine Quitline** offers free telephone counseling, information, and referral services for Massachusetts residents who want to quit using tobacco and niocotine products. Visit online anytime at www.mass.gov/quitting or call:

1-800-QUIT-NOW
1-800-784-8669 (English)

1-855-DÉJALO-YA
1-855-335-3569 (Español)

TTY Dial 711

Additional resources:

- **American Cancer Society**
  1-800-227-2345
  www.cancer.org
- **American Lung Association**
  www.lungusa.org
- **Resources for Massachusetts Elders**
  1-800-Age-Info
  (1-800-243-4636)
  Executive Office of Elder Affairs

