

What to know about pulse oximeters

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- near an open flame or while smoking.
- Place the concentrator in an open space to reduce chances of device failure from overheating.
- Don't block any vents on the concentrator since it may impact device performance.
- Periodically check your device for any alarms to make sure you are getting enough oxygen.
- Don't make changes to the oxygen levels delivered by the device on your own. Consult your health provider.

Oxygen levels are monitored by a small device called a pulse oximeter, which is placed on a finger, toe or forehead.

When using a pulse oximeter, the FDA says you should:

- Sit still and don't move the part of your body where the pulse oximeter is.
- Don't use the device on your hands when your hands are cold.
- Remove all fingernail polish if using the device on your hands.

(HealthDay)—If you use an oxygen concentrator and a pulse oximeter at home, proper use is crucial, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says.

Conditions such as asthma, [lung cancer](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease](#), the flu and COVID-19 can all cause [oxygen levels](#) in the body to drop. When levels are too low, [oxygen therapy](#) may be required to boost them.

One way to get extra oxygen into the body is by using a prescription [medical device](#) called an [oxygen concentrator](#).

But giving yourself too much or too little oxygen can be dangerous, so it's important to talk with your doctor and get a prescription before buying an oxygen concentrator for use at home, the FDA advises in a news release.

The FDA offers tips for safe oxygen concentrator use at home:

- Don't use it or any other oxygen product

Don't rely solely on the pulse oximeter. It's important to keep track of your symptoms and how you feel. Contact a doctor if your symptoms are serious or get worse.

If you are using a pulse oximeter to monitor your oxygen levels and are concerned about the reading, contact a health care provider, the FDA says.

More information: For more on oxygen therapy, go to the [American Lung Association](#).

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