

# Burn Prevention: Medical Oxygen Safety

The use of portable medical oxygen in the home has grown significantly over the past decade. For a person with breathing difficulties, medical oxygen provides air containing a higher percentage of oxygen. Fire needs oxygen to burn. If a fire should start in an oxygen-enriched area, it can burn hotter and spread faster. Homes where medical oxygen is used need to follow specific fire safety rules to keep people safe from fire and burns.

## Safety Tips

- There is no safe way to smoke in the home when oxygen is in use. A patient on oxygen should never smoke.
- Candles, matches, wood stoves and even sparking toys can be ignition sources and should not be used in the home.
- Keep oxygen cylinders at least 5 feet away from any heat source, open flames or electrical devices.
- Body oil, hand lotion and items containing oil and grease can easily ignite. Keep oil and grease away from where oxygen is in use.
- Never use aerosol sprays containing combustible materials near the oxygen.

Post “No Smoking” and “No Open Flames” signs inside and outside the home to remind people not to smoke.



## OXYGEN FACTS

- Oxygen saturates fabric-covered furniture, clothing, hair and bedding, making it easier for a fire to start and spread.
- Smoking materials are the leading heat source resulting in medical oxygen related fires, injuries and deaths.

Source: [nfpa.org/education](https://www.nfpa.org/education)

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