

Supporting Someone on Oxygen



Invite Them Out

- “Be the first to take them out—one on one—for a meal, being as matter of fact as possible.”
- “If you’re a friend, don’t forget to invite them over to your house just as you did in the past.”
- “Keep inviting them even if they decline.”



Learn How To Use Oxygen

- “Learn as much as you can about the equipment operation. Nothing is worse than trying to talk your caregiver through an explanation of how to change the regulator to a new tank while you are short of breath and needing it fast!”
- “Learn about using an oximeter and the importance of owning and using one.”



Encourage Independence

- “Do not fuss or hover. You want the patient to have autonomy and a sense of control.”
- “Don’t jump to help immediately. You want your loved one to stay self-sufficient.”



Offer To Help with Chores And Tasks

- “I was always appreciative of a friend offering to help do some daily chores. When they offered, it let me know that they were thinking of me and offering help to eliminate any further stress. I knew I could not do it all and gladly accepted with a smile. When you are gasping for air and someone hands you an oxygen cannula, it is like winning the lottery.”



Be Supportive and Understanding

- “The first time I went on oxygen I was really self-conscious. All of a sudden I LOOKED sick, whereas before people didn’t really know without a visual as blatant as tubes in your face. There’s a psychological adjustment that takes support and understanding, listening and encouraging.”
- “I am an active person, very independent, watch my weight, etc. and where we had to compromise was that I had to look in the mirror and say ‘you are someone that will have to ask for help for the first time in your life.’ The hardest thing for them was to wait until I asked for help, as they wanted to do everything for me.”