



# Hyperbaric Oxygen (HBO) Therapy

## What is HBO Therapy?

Hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) therapy is a medical treatment prescribed by a doctor to enhance the body's ability to heal. During hyperbaric oxygen therapy, you breathe 100% pure oxygen while inside a pressurized chamber. The pressure inside this chamber is about two and a half times greater than the normal pressure in the atmosphere.

This high pressure environment allows your blood to carry more oxygen to all parts of your body to repair injured tissue. HBO therapy also helps to fight certain infections, such as those that occur in the bone.



## HBO Therapy Process

Once you are in the hyperbaric chamber and the door is closed, you will hear the oxygen beginning to circulate as the technician starts the gradual increase in pressure. This is called compression. Some patients experience a temporary warmth, but after the initial compression period, the temperature will regulate and be very comfortable.

During compression, you may feel a fullness or popping sensation in your ears similar to what is felt while flying in a plane or driving in the mountains. Your technician will teach you how to clear your ears to relieve this sensation.

The compression period generally lasts between 10 and 15 minutes. Once the compression period is over, you will no longer feel the fullness in your ears. You will remain in the chamber for 1.5 to 2 hours. During this time, you may rest or sleep, watch television or listen to music.

Near the end of your treatment, the technician will gradually decrease the pressure inside the chamber. This is called decompression.

**Your compliance with the plan of care is the single most important factor in your healing!**

## HBO Therapy Indications

Many different conditions have been shown to benefit from HBO therapy, especially chronic, non-healing wounds. HBO therapy is often used in conjunction with other treatments.

Conditions treated with HBO therapy include:

- Diabetic foot ulcers
- Chronic bone infections (osteomyelitis)
- Non-healing surgical skin flaps and grafts
- Symptoms caused by radiation therapy (such as pain, wounds, rectal or bladder bleeding)
- Crush injuries
- Certain types of sudden hearing loss
- Sudden vision loss

## HBO Therapy Side Effects

Prior to your treatment, your physician will discuss with you potential risks and side effects. Most patients experience no side effects from HBO therapy. However, some patients may feel ear discomfort or sinus pressure.

## HBO Therapy Treatments

HBO therapy is an outpatient procedure that is provided once daily, for approximately four to six weeks. A staff member will tell you how many treatments you will need. One treatment takes about two hours and is quite comfortable for most patients.

For HBO therapy to be effective, it must be provided five days a week. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is much like antibiotic treatment because it only works when taken regularly for the time prescribed by your physician.

We understand that coming to the HBO unit every day is a commitment, however, to obtain the greatest benefit from hyperbaric oxygen therapy, we strongly advise coming to every scheduled appointment.

Compliance with your plan of care is the single most important factor in your healing. Our primary goal is to help you heal. We encourage you to make a commitment to your healing.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL:**

**FHN Memorial Hospital  
The Center for Wound Healing at**

**815.599.7410**

1036 W. Stephenson Street, FHN Specialty Care - Stephenson Street  
Freeport, IL 61032

fhn.org