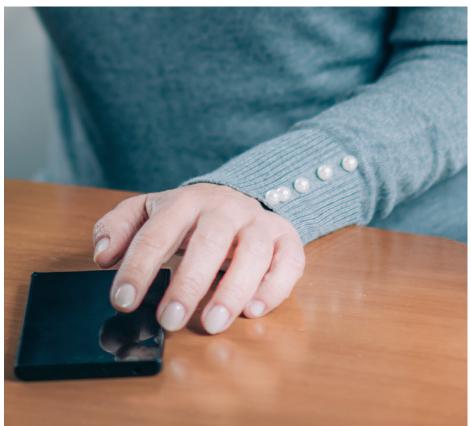REMEDI

Administered by Discovery Health

REMEDI MEDICAL AID SCHEME

MONITORING YOUR OXYGEN LEVELS AT HOME

PULSE OXIMETER DEVICES

As a member of Remedi Medical Aid Scheme, administered by Discovery Health, the Scheme offers home oxygen monitoring devices as part of the WHO Global Outbreak benefit. Home oxygen monitoring is of value for specific members who meet the Scheme's clinical entry criteria, who by definition may be at higher risk to develop serious complications from COVID-19. A home pulse oximeter is a small, lightweight device that monitors the amount of oxygen in your blood.

Emerging evidence from the COVID-19 outbreaks in Europe and the US shows that COVID-19 pneumonia initially causes a reduction of oxygen levels in the blood. Healthcare professionals call it 'silent hypoxia'. Patients with this type of pneumonia usually do not feel short of breath even though their oxygen levels are dropping. These patients may only start showing symptoms later on when they may already be in a critical condition. Using a pulse oximeter device (especially around day 5 to 10 of the infection), helps detect oxygen-related problems early on and allows for early referral – before patients become critically ill.

What this benefit includes

- One pulse oximeter device funded in full for qualifying members (one device per family) if you get it from our network provider.

- Access to a dedicated Oximetry Support call centre to support your home care.

- Up to two consultations with a wellness specialist to help with the tracking and monitoring of your oxygen-saturation levels.

- Referral to a GP, where necessary.

This brochure gives you information and outlines the steps you need to follow to get the most out of using the pulse oximeter device at home.

Qualifying criteria

Members who qualify for the pulse oximeter device are those with confirmed COVID-19 disease who we have identified as potentially at a higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease due to:

- Their age

- Their underlying chronic medical conditions

- And who meet the Scheme's clinical entry criteria.

Our dedicated Oximetry Support call centre will contact you via a phone call or SMS if you qualify for this pulse oximeter device.

How do I obtain the device?

We want to get you your device as quickly as possible. You can choose how you receive your device:
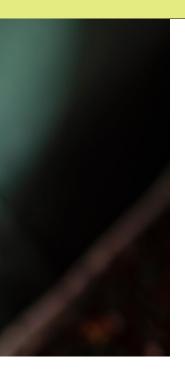
- Collection: A nominated representative (family member or friend) can collect your pulse oximeter device on your behalf, at our pharmacy partner.

- Delivery: A courier company will deliver the pulse oximeter device to your home.

Once you have received the device, a wellness specialist will call you at least once over the two week period from when you receive the oximeter device. This is to assist you with using the device and to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

MONITOR YOUR OXYGEN LEVELS AT HOME

WHAT IS A PULSE OXIMETER DEVICE?

A pulse oximeter is a non-invasive (on the outside of your body) and painless device that measures the oxygen levels in your blood. It can quickly detect even small changes in how efficiently your blood carries oxygen to the extremities of your body, such as your fingers and toes. The oximeter measures oxygen levels as a percentage (scored out of 100). We call this your oxygen saturation.

What is pulse oximetry used for?

People with a lung condition may have a blood oxygen level that is lower than normal, so pulse oximetry can help to diagnose if there is a problem.

How does a pulse oximeter work?

We use a device to measure how much light your blood absorbs. We call this device a pulse oximeter. You place a small clamp-like device on one finger, the oximeter then shines two lights through your fingertip: one red light and one infrared light. The device is the able to measure how much oxygen is in your blood.

HOW TO DO A PULSE OXIMETRY TEST

For instructions on how to set up the device, read the manual in the device box.

1 Getting ready for a pulse oximetry test

The following can prevent the pulse oximeter from reading your oxygen levels accurately:

01 | Bright light (like sunlight)

02 | Excess dirt on the fingers

03 | Nail polish (especially dark shades)

04 | Artificial nails

05 | Movement, as it interferes with pulse signalling.

Follow these steps to prepare for your test so you can get the most accurate result:

01 | Wash your hands.

02 | Remove any nail polish and false nails from one of your fingers (the one on which you will place the oximeter).

03 | Make sure you are in a comfortable position away from bright lighting where you can hold still for the quick measurement process.

Medical conditions such as anaemia and Raynaud's syndrome can affect pulse oximetry results. Talk to your healthcare professional if you are concerned about this.

2 Doing the test

When you are ready to start measuring, place the oximeter on any finger. Make sure your finger is clean and does not have nail varnish or a false nail. Leave the device firmly on your finger and hold still until the readings display. It is best to rest your hand lightly on a flat surface. Write down these readings in the table at the end of this brochure. Normal blood saturation levels are between 95 and 100%.

3 Keep record of the readings

Take these readings and record them **two times a day, every day, for two weeks.**

A wellness specialist will call you at least once over the two week period from when you receive the oximeter device.

If your oxygen level drops to **between 90 and 94% and you are feeling unwell** (like if you have shortness of breath or a fever), we recommend that you have a virtual consultation with your GP.

If your oxygen level is **between 90% and 94% and you are feeling well:**

- Move around.

- Go outside to get fresh air or open windows.

- Take a few good breaths.

- Maintain good hydration by drinking water.

- Repeat the pulse oximetry test again in one hour. If the second reading is still between 90 and 94%, call your GP for assistance.

If your oxygen saturation readings drop below 90% on any reading, or you feel unwell at any given time, please consult with your doctor immediately.

Our Oximetry Support call centre is open from 08:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday. If your readings decrease after-hours or over a weekend, please contact your doctor.
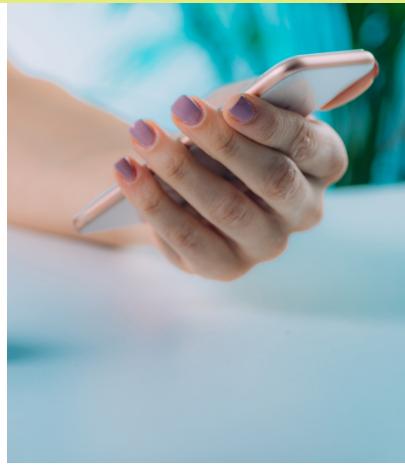
UNDERSTANDING YOUR OXIMETRY READINGS

The device shows your pulse rate, measured in beats per minute and it shows your oxygen saturation percentage (%) reading on the display screen. For more information on how to read the device screen, refer to the manual provided in the device box.

If you have any difficulty breathing such as shortness of breath or wheezing, contact your doctor immediately – even if your readings look normal.

Understanding your pulse oximeter readings	
95% or above	Continue to track and record your oxygen saturation levels, twice daily, during the two-week period.
90% to 94%	If your levels decrease to between 90% and 94% over two readings taken at least an hour apart, you must call your treating GP for medical assistance.
Below 90%	If your levels decrease to below 90% on any reading, or if you have difficulty breathing, get medical help from your doctor immediately.

Use the template we give in this document to record your readings

An example of how to capture your readings is shown below:

Date	Reading one		Reading two	
	Oxygen saturation (%)	Pulse reading (bpm)	Oxygen saturation (%)	Pulse reading (bpm)
23/01/2021	98%	72bpm	97%	75bpm

RECORD AND TRACK YOUR OXYGEN LEVELS HERE

Please use this template to record your readings. You will discuss these readings when our wellness specialist calls you at least once over the two week period from when you receive the oximeter device or when you consult with your doctor.

Date	Reading one		Reading two	
	Oxygen saturation (%)	Pulse reading (bpm)	Oxygen saturation (%)	Pulse reading (bpm)

CONTACT OUR DEDICATED OXIMETRY SUPPORT CALL CENTRE ON 011 529 6113 DURING OFFICE HOURS

SELECT OPTION ONE FOR CLINICAL SUPPORT QUERIES AND OPTION TWO FOR OPERATIONAL QUERIES RELATED TO YOUR OXIMETER DEVICE.

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