

# Respiratory Care Services

## John Dempsey Hospital

### Policy and Procedure Manual

**Subject:** Oxygen via Nasal Cannula

**Rationale:** The actual oxygen concentration delivered to the patient with a nasal cannula depends on respiratory pattern and rate. This diagram suggests approximate concentrations, but should be regarded as an estimate only.

<i>Low Flow System</i>	<i>Liter flow</i>	<i>Approx. O<sub>2</sub> % Delivered*</i>
Nasal Cannula	1	24
	2	28
	3	32
	4	36
	5	40
	6	45

\* Approximately 4% / liter

**Equipment:** Oxygen Flowmeter  
Humidifier (simple bubble type)  
Connective Tubing  
Nasal Cannula

**NOTE:** Humidifiers will not be given to *adult* patients on 4 liters or less of oxygen unless requested by a physician or the patient.

**Procedure**

1. Obtain the necessary equipment in the Respiratory Therapy equipment room and proceed to the patient's nursing unit.
2. Read the patient's order sheet for the doctor's specific instructions. Verify the patient's name, DOB, and bed location.
3. Proceed to the patient's bed, introduce yourself, explain what you are about to do and that it has been ordered by the patient's doctor. Check the patient's name and DOB verbally and by the patient's wristband. Be reassuring. Be sure there is no ignition material at the patient's bedside.
4. Wash your hands.
5. Connect the flowmeter to the oxygen source and to the humidifier. Attach the connecting tube and nasal cannula.
6. Be sure there is flow from the cannula. Test for leaks, loose connections and proper operation of the pressure relief valve by pinching the connecting tube close to the cannula. Turn off the flowmeter.
7. Gently place the cannula in the patient's nostrils and adjust the plastic adjusting tie for maximum comfort and security.
8. Turn the flowmeter on to the dose prescribed in the doctor's order. Observe the initial effects of the treatment and make any necessary adjustments.
9. Charge the patient for the equipment used and for the appropriate oxygen hourly usage.

Issued: 9/88

Revised: 1/91, 2/92, 12/94, 2/95, 7/95, 11/05