

Pulse Oximeter

What is a pulse oximeter? A pulse oximeter, or “pulse ox,” is a handheld, clip-like electronic device that measures the oxygen level of your blood and your heart rate/pulse.

How often should I check my oxygen level? Check your oxygen level three times a day. If you are experiencing a change in your breathing pattern or increased difficulty breathing, you should check your oxygen level more frequently.

How do I use a pulse oximeter?

1. Turn on the pulse oximeter device.
2. Make sure the display is facing upward and you can read the numbers.
3. Open the device by pinching it (similar to opening a clip). Insert one finger all the way to the back of the device with your fingernail facing upward.
4. Close the device on your finger and wait 5-10 seconds. For best results, keep hand still while taking a reading.
5. Your results will display on the screen.

What do my results mean? There may be two numbers on the display screen (may vary by device):

- The number labeled %SpO₂ is the oxygen level of your blood.
- The number labeled HR, PR or ♥ /min is your heart rate/pulse.



Troubleshooting Tips:

- Make sure the device is turned on.
- Ensure your hands are warm and without fingernail polish or acrylic nails because they can cause inaccurate readings.
- Try a different finger.
- Check the battery

**Your pulse oximeter may look similar or different, depending on the model.

For life-threatening emergencies, such as extreme shortness of breath or chest pain, call 911.

Pulse Ox (%SpO ₂) Reading	What To Do:
93-100	Continue to check your oxygen level as needed.
92 or less	Contact the Clinician Hotline at 414-216-9421