



What is a pulse oximeter?

Pulse oximetry is a way to measure how much oxygen your blood is carrying. By using a small device called a pulse oximeter, your blood oxygen level can be checked without needing to be stuck with a needle. The blood oxygen level measured with an oximeter is called your oxygen saturation level (abbreviated O₂sat or SaO₂). This is a percentage of how much oxygen your blood is carrying compared to the maximum it is capable of carrying. Normally, more than 89% of your red blood should be carrying oxygen.

How should I clean my oxygen meter?

Wipe off all surfaces of the oxygen meter using a cloth, paper towel or cotton ball dampened with rubbing alcohol that contains at least 60% isopropyl. Do this after each use and before being used by others.

COVID-19: How to Monitor Your Oxygen Level

How do I use my fingertip oxygen meter?

1. Measure your oxygen level twice per day, in the morning and at night (or more often if instructed by your health care provider)
2. Make sure there are batteries inside and turn the device on. Put your index finger (the finger next to your thumb) into the oxygen meter with your fingernail facing up. If the screen does not show a number, try another finger (not your thumb)
3. Two numbers will appear, the SpO₂ number is your oxygen level and the other is your heart rate.
4. Sit still and do not move the part of your body where the pulse oximeter is
5. Do not use the device on your hands when your hands are cold
6. Remove all fingernail polish if using the device on your hands.
7. Record your oxygen levels.

Oxygen Level	Guidance
90% or less	This oxygen level is very concerning and may indicate a severe medical problem. Call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room immediately.
91% to 94%	This oxygen level is concerning and may indicate a medical problem. Call your health care provider immediately. You can also go to a nearby emergency room if you cannot reach a provider.
95% to 100%	This oxygen level is normal. Walk around for two minutes and measure your oxygen level again. If your oxygen level falls below 95%, follow the instructions above.

Source: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/covid/providers/covid-19-monitor-oxygen-patient-handout.pdf>

Do not rely only on this device. It is important to keep track of your symptoms, or how you feel. Contact a doctor if your symptoms are serious or get worse.