

Oxygen Therapy Anti Aging

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The term "oxygen therapy" refers to a range of treatments that can be categorized into two basic groups: oxygenation, which refers to adding oxygen to the blood, and oxidation, which refers to a chemical process in which an electrically charged particle (electron) is split off from a molecule (which may or may not be an oxygen molecule). Oxygenation: Oxygen can be administered in a number of ways-orally, rectally, vaginally, by vein, by artery, through inhalation or via skin absorption. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (100% oxygen delivered under high pressure) is familiar to most people as a treatment for deep-sea divers who, having surfaced too quickly, suffer from decompression sickness (the bends). Hyperbaric oxygen therapy, whether in a hyperbaric chamber or via a special oxygen (pressure) mask, also can be used to treat a number of conditions that benefit from an oxygen-rich environment:

Oxidation: More often than not, we try to counteract the damage oxidation can cause by using antioxidants. However, oxidation is not always a bad thing. In fact, the body functions best in a state of oxidative balance. When infection or environmental stress challenges this balance, the body may need an oxidation "wake-up" call. Because of the potential for damage however, oxidative therapies are controversial and must be administered by a qualified professional. Oxidative therapies include hydrogen peroxide, ultraviolet blood irradiation, and ozone. Ozone therapy is widely used in Europe but is not yet sanctioned by the Food and Drug Administration for use in the United States.

ROLE FOR ANTI-AGING: Oxygen therapy can help to jump start the body's antioxidant defenses and ability to fight free radicals, boost metabolism, and counteract the hypoxia (low oxygen level) that leads to sluggish cell activity and oxidative stress. Research has shown that oxygen therapy can help to improve the efficiency of hemoglobin in transporting oxygen around the body, improve blood flow by helping to keep cell membranes flexible, and detoxify and fight infection by destroying bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi that thrive in low-oxygen environments and don't have the antioxidant resources to fight back. Hyperbaric oxygen can treat carbon monoxide poisoning-by displacing the lethal gas with oxygen, it may also be beneficial to people who have sustained burns, crush injuries and radiation damage as it stimulates the regrowth of damaged tissues. There is some evidence to suggest that hyperbaric oxygen may also help to kill cancer cells and reduce toxic symptoms associated with chemotherapy, relieve fatigue and numbness associated with AIDS, increase resistance to opportunistic infections in people with AIDS, reduce post-ischemic stroke damage, and relieve the symptoms of multiple sclerosis. However, none of these benefits of hyperbaric oxygen therapy has been clinically proven.

SIDE EFFECTS/CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Because of the pressure inherent in treatment, people with a history of middle ear infection, emphysema or spontaneous pneumonia should avoid hyperbaric oxygen therapy.