



El Dorado County Emergency Medical Services Agency

Quick Reference

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

Medication Profile

OXYGEN (O₂)

Class:

Gas

Action:

Oxidizes glucose to provide energy at the cellular level
Essential for normal metabolic function (aerobic metabolism)

Onset: Immediate

Duration:

Adult & Pediatric Administration:

- Mild respiratory distress:
 - 2-6 L/minute
- Severe respiratory distress, acute congestive heart failure, or cardiac arrest:
 - Use a system that provides high-inspired oxygen concentration (preferably 100%)
- Titrate oxygen up or down according to oxygen saturation levels
 - Keep saturation at or above 94%
- Patients with chronic COPD may normally maintain saturation values below 94%
 - Do not withhold oxygen if patient is in distress
- In most serious cases, move quickly to advanced airway devices, intubation/ Supraglottic airway devices, and 100% oxygen

Indications:

Whenever oxygen demands may be decreased
Oxygen saturation less than 94%

Contraindications:

Not significant

Side Effects:

- Not significant

Pregnancy:

Category A

Notes:

- Oxygen therapy should never be withheld from a patient in respiratory distress
- Use with caution in COPD patients and observe for change in respiratory and mental status