Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy and Treatment in the Monoplace Chamber

What is hyperbaric oxygen therapy?
Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is a medical treatment that promotes wound healing. It involves breathing 100% oxygen while sitting or lying in a chamber that is pressurized.

Why hyperbaric treatments?
In the chamber, large doses of oxygen are dissolved into your blood and body tissues. This increased oxygen promotes wound healing by:
• Stimulating small blood vessel growth, or
• Stopping tissue damage from carbon monoxide poisoning, or
• Helping to heal body tissue after radiation therapy.

A hyperbaric doctor will talk with you about the reasons for your treatment. The number of treatments you need depends on your condition and how you respond to treatment.

How often will I have treatments?
Generally, treatments are scheduled daily, Monday through Friday. Plan on being in the department for at least three hours for each treatment. On occasion, you may be treated twice a day. Weekend treatments are rare and are based on patient needs.

Please call the hyperbaric department as soon as possible if you have a cold or flu symptoms (fever of 100° F or higher, cough, runny nose, vomiting, diarrhea or general aching). Your therapy will probably be postponed until the doctor clears you. You may leave a message by calling the hyperbaric department or clinic directly.

Are there restrictions I should follow?
While being treated in hyperbaric you should not use tobacco. Tobacco products of any kind will cause your blood vessels to shrink in size, making treatments less effective. We can refer you to programs that will help you stop smoking. If you cannot stop using tobacco products, your treatments may be stopped.

There are no eating restrictions when receiving hyperbaric treatments. If you are already on a special diet for diabetes, kidney failure, or other reasons, you should continue it.

Do not take any injections within 45 minutes before your hyperbaric treatment. Also avoid taking stool softeners and diuretics (water pills) right before your treatment.

We will review all the medicines you are taking. Hyperbaric treatments should not change the effect of most of your medicines. Please talk with us if you have any questions about taking your medicines.

What will I wear during my treatments?
Breathing 100% oxygen in the hyperbaric chamber results in an increased risk of fire. You must wear only hospital-provided clothing made of 100% cotton or a cotton/polyester blend to reduce static electricity and fire risk. We will give you a gown to change into before your treatment.

For the same safety reasons, no lighters, matches, body warmers, watches, hearing aids, make-up or hair spray, electronic devices, cell phones, or battery-operated items are allowed. Please empty your pockets before treatment.
What should I expect during treatment?  
Treatments should be painless. Because of the air pressure changes in the chamber, your ears may have a sense of fullness when the treatment begins. If you feel any pain, please tell the hyperbaric attendant. We will review the steps for “ear clearing” before your treatment.

As with any medical treatment, there are complications that can be a part of hyperbaric treatment. The hyperbaric doctor will discuss these with you and get your consent to start treatments.

We will do dressing changes before or right after the treatment, based on your wound care needs. You will be given an assigned time for care as needed. The hyperbaric doctor will see you as needed, and we will keep the doctor up to date on your progress.

Visual changes can occasionally occur during hyperbaric treatments. Do not buy any new eyeglasses during hyperbaric treatment. In most cases your vision should return to pre-treatment status within 6 to 8 weeks after treatment has stopped.

Please inform the hyperbaric team if you have an implantable device.

Other needs  
We will notify your primary care doctor when your hyperbaric treatments start.

If dressing changes are needed when the department is closed, we will arrange for home nursing care or instruct someone in your family. If other care arrangements are needed, we may contact our Social Services department.

If you need transportation to or from the hospital, please let us know. We can help arrange for transportation or move your treatment times if needed.

It is your responsibility to verify insurance coverage. We will help you in any way we can through our financial counselor.