

Frequently Asked Questions

McKesson Fingertip Pulse Oximeter (Adult & Pediatric)

MFR # 16-93651

1. What does a pulse oximeter measure and why is it important?

A: A pulse oximeter is a convenient, painless device that measures your **heart rate** and the **percentage of oxygen** in the blood of your arteries. The oxygen saturation in your blood is one indication of how well your lungs are working. Illnesses such as pneumonia can cause the oxygen level to drop. A pulse oximeter can detect a drop in oxygen saturation signaling the possible need for medical intervention.

For a better understanding on the use and interpretation of pulse oximetry, see the February 2021 FDA announcement "[Pulse Oximeter Accuracy and Limitations: FDA Safety Communications.](#)"

2. How does a pulse oximeter work?

A. When attached to your finger, the pulse oximeter shines two types of light (red and infrared) through your finger, some of which is absorbed by hemoglobin, a protein on your red blood cells that carries oxygen to the cells of your body.

Oxygenated hemoglobin absorbs more of the infrared light, while the deoxygenated absorbs more of the red light. The pulse oximeter measures the amount of each type of light absorbed, calculates a ratio, and then converts it to a percentage of oxygenated blood that you see on the device screen.



3. What is a normal oxygen saturation level measured with a pulse oximeter?

A. In general, a normal oxygen saturation is 95%-100%, but some experts feel that above 90% is typically acceptable. Different illnesses and chronic diseases can affect what the expected normal oxygen saturation should be for an individual. Speak with your health care provider to determine what level is considered normal for you.

4. How do I know this model of pulse oximeter is accurate?

A: The pulse oximeter has been calibrated by comparing measurements with the results of a blood gas analyzer, the gold standard for measuring oxygen levels in a sample of arterial blood. The pulse oximeter needs no additional calibration.

5. **How should I place the pulse oximeter on my finger?**
 - A. Fully insert your finger into the clip and rest your forearm and hand on a stable surface. Studies show that the best finger to use is the middle finger of your dominant hand.
6. **What type of batteries are required and how long will they last?**
 - A. Two AAA alkaline batteries are required and could provide 16 hours of continuous measurement.
7. **What factors can cause an inaccurate measurement from the pulse oximeter?**
 - A. Improper placement of the finger clip, movement of the finger or hand, an unclean surface in the finger clip, or poor blood circulation (cold fingers) could prevent the monitor from working properly.
8. **How do I clean the pulse oximeter and what is the required maintenance?**
 - A. Gently wipe the screen and all surfaces using a soft cloth dampened with 70% isopropyl alcohol. Allow it to fully dry before use. There is no required maintenance or calibration for this device.
9. **When should I call my doctor about my oxygen saturation level?**
 - A. Speak with your health care provider about using a pulse oximeter at home and develop a plan of care that includes your expected oxygen saturation level and when to call a doctor. Certain illnesses and chronic disease can affect an individual's baseline or "normal" level of oxygen in their blood.

Troubleshooting the McKesson Fingertip Pulse Oximeter <small>(from product insert: Possible Problems and Resolutions)</small>	
Problem	Solution
Oxygen percentage and/or heart rate not displayed as usual	If the finger is not inserted correctly, try reinserting finger
	If the finger is trembling or the patient is moving, stabilize the patient
The pulse oximeter cannot be powered on	Replace batteries if depleted
	If installed incorrectly, reinstall batteries
	If oximeter is damaged, call McKesson Product Support Team: 1-800-777-4908
Indication lamps are suddenly off	The oximeter automatically powered off after 8 seconds of non-use
	Replace batteries if depleted
"Error 3", "Error 4", or "Error 7" on screen	Replace batteries if depleted
	Call McKesson Product Support Team: 1-800-777-4908