

THE SECOND WAVE OF OXYGEN

By Rhett Bergeron, M.D.

What do hockey coaches have in common with Parkinson's sufferers? What could an Irish Olympic athlete possibly share with a patient bedridden from chronic Lyme disease?

Oxygen. The elixir of life. The one substance every cell in your body needs to function—whether it's to heal chronic illness or perfect your 4-minute mile. Now mild hyperbaric oxygen therapy, which delivers oxygen to every cell under pressure, is affordable and can even be done regularly in your own home. These new FDA approved chambers that, with a prescription from a doctor, can be bought for home use; or can be used in the clinic at about ¼ the cost of treatments in freestanding clinics.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is an unprecedented, powerful, gentle healing modality. And now it's finally become affordable, and can even be done in your own home.

Mild hyperbaric therapy is safe and yet highly effective. It constitutes a huge leap forward in alternative and innovative medicine. There is nothing as inspiring and gratifying to a doctor as watching patients with debilitating chronic illnesses improve for the first time in years, and regain a sense of well-being. Just listen in on a few comments from my patients and athletes who've used it:

Greg Stathis, the head hockey coach at Georgia Tech for eleven seasons, uses the therapy because he has had two kidneys removed. "Because of the chamber," he says, "I feel better than I have in ten years. I have introduced the chamber to the twenty-five players on my team and have noticed immediate improvements in their performance. They have more stamina and energy."

Dee Marie Austin suffers from Crohn's disease, Fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma and allergies. She has had three bouts of cancer, with chemotherapy and radiation treatments. After using the chamber, "I am nothing short of astounded" she says. "Hyperbaric has helped me from the very first sessions. For the first time in years," she says, "I am able to sleep more than 2 hours at a time. There are not enough words for me to express how I feel about this therapy."

On the other hand, healthy, active individuals benefit as well. Murlean Tucker, a former national aerobic champion and fitness instructor says "I came out feeling as if I'd slept for hours! The energy I receive from the chamber to teach my fitness classes far surpasses anything I ever expected." Karen Shinkins, an Irish Olympic athlete, began treatments while training for the 400 meter race and told me, "I have made it through some of the hardest workouts imaginable, in some world class times. I would recommend the chamber to any sports person seeking 'the edge'."

So, let's take a closer look at this therapy. It is both revolutionary and tried-and-true. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy itself has been around for quite a while.



SAVING CELLS WITH OXYGEN

Normally, oxygen is carried around your body by red blood cells. However, during HBO therapy, you breathe oxygen under pressure, and far higher amounts of oxygen flood the body, dissolving in your plasma and reaching all your cells. The experience is pleasant, you cannot "feel" the pressure, and many patients feel so relaxed they actually fall asleep.

The benefits are nothing less than profound: a marked increased ability of white blood cells to destroy bacteria, greater production of fibroblasts (cells necessary for wound healing), growth of new blood vessels, and stimulation of damaged cells such as brain neurons. Super oxygen saturation of tissue stops the spread of certain toxins and enhances the killing of bacteria, speeding the healing of difficult or antibiotic-resistant infections. That's why oxygen given with increased pressure can correct many serious health problems. Studies have shown that difficult and disabling conditions such as multiple sclerosis, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, Lyme disease, cerebral palsy, brain trauma, and stroke, all improve in astonishing ways with this treatment.

Until recently, however, this therapy has mostly been available only in hospitals for a small number of conditions, or in specialized clinics that charge around \$150-200 a session and require you to travel far from home, adding in the

expense of airfare and lodging during the weeks and months you are undergoing the therapy. These freestanding clinics are not reimbursed by insurance, and once you return home, the treatments stop.

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The premier specialist who is in a sense the father of Hyperbaric medicine in the United States, Richard Neubauer, M.D., has found that in most conditions, relatively low pressure HBO (around 1.3-1.5 ata) is highly effective. Another specialist, Gunnar Heuser, M.D., Ph.D., found that at mild pressures, circulation and blood flow improved in the brain (using spect scan imaging) and that programmed cell death decreased, while natural killer cell activity increased. This was after only ten sessions.

Mild chambers come in three sizes, and the largest one can easily accommodate two people (so that, for instance, a mother can go in with a child with cerebral palsy). Even when used without oxygen, these chambers compress air and deliver more oxygen to tissues, and have been found to be beneficial. I've found that many of my patients begin treatments at my clinic, and are so impressed with the powerful healing effect, they soon purchase one for home use. In addition, patients on medications have found they can reduce or often eliminate the medications.

I consider these chambers engineering marvels. You can adjust the pressure and flow-rate to your own needs, and when a chamber is at home you no longer need to disrupt your life to have access to this healing modality. It is your choice. Freedom and healing are just a chamber away.

**www.GenoxInc.com - info on
hyperbaric oxygen equipment.**

**www.HBOTreatment.com –
medical research and
information on hyperbaric
oxygen therapy.**