

Will I receive any other treatment?

Your normal treatments for your breathing condition, such as nebulisers, antibiotics and steroids will continue alongside using the NIV.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask any of the people involved in your care who will be happy to help.

Non-Invasive Ventilation for Decompensated Type 2 Respiratory Failure

Important information for patients



This leaflet is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.



What is Non-Invasive Ventilation (NIV)?

NIV is a treatment to help you with your breathing using a machine attached to a face mask that fits firmly, but not too tightly, on your face. It is not an oxygen mask, or a nebuliser, but a specific treatment to help reduce your own work of breathing.



How does it work?

When you become poorly and have to work harder to catch your breath, your breathing muscles can become tired. If this happens it can lead to a build-up of the waste gas (carbon dioxide) in your blood, which can make your blood acidic and not enough oxygen is getting into your blood (type 2 ventilatory failure).

- NIV supports your breathing to give your muscles a rest and allow you time to recover.
- It does not breathe for you, but gently assists each breath that you take.
- This can help to get your oxygen and carbon dioxide levels towards normal.

What does NIV feel like?

As you take a breath in you will feel a flow of air from the machine, then as you breathe out there will be a little resistance to help keep your lungs open.

It can feel a bit strange to start with, however most people find that they get used to it fairly easily.

How will I be monitored?

- The physiotherapist or nurse will set the machine up and make sure that it is as comfortable for you as possible.
- A peg-like probe will be placed on your finger to measure the oxygen level in the blood.



- A blood test will need to be taken after the first hour to check that your oxygen and carbon dioxide levels are improving.
- The nursing staff will check on you frequently, so if you do find it uncomfortable they can help.
- You will have your buzzer nearby to call for help at any time.

How long do I need to use NIV for?

- The length of time you need it will depend on how quickly the oxygen and carbon dioxide levels in your blood improve.
- To start with you need to wear the mask as much as possible for the first 24 hours. It can be removed for short periods to enable you to eat and drink as normal and to take your medication.
- After the first 24 hours you will usually be asked to wear the NIV for two hours in the morning and afternoon as well as overnight and then reduced down to overnight only.
- Your doctor will discuss your treatment with you.