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HYPERBARIC-OXYGEN THERAPY

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HYPERBARIC oxygen — 100 percent oxygen at two to three times the atmospheric pressure at sea level — can result in arterial oxygen tension in excess of 2000 mm Hg and oxygen tension in tissue of almost 400 mm Hg. Such doses of oxygen have a number of beneficial biochemical, cellular, and physiologic effects, and today there are 259 hyperbaric facilities in the United States with 344 single-occupant (“monoplace”) hyperbaric-oxygen chambers. In this article, we review the mechanisms of action, evidence of clinical efficacy, and risks of therapy with hyperbaric oxygen.