

## **NHS Adds Additional Hyperbaric Chamber to Meet Increasing Need**

TAHLEQUAH, Oklahoma – Northeastern Health System recently added an additional hyperbaric chamber to its Wound Management Center to meet the increasing need of patients seeking specialized Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT).

While HBOT is used for numerous approved indications, the center at NHS primarily treats failed diabetic ulcers, chronic refractory osteomyelitis and radiation injuries from cancer treatments.

David Carroll, NREMT-P Hyperbaric Tech and Safety Director, explains how HBOT works in the treatment of wounds.

“The air we normally breathe is 21 percent oxygen and 79 percent nitrogen and other trace elements, at a 14.7 psi. In the hyperbaric chamber we increase the oxygen to 100 percent and the pressure 2-3 times normal, and sometimes up to 4 times, depending on the case,” explained Carroll.

“In a standard HBOT ‘dive’ the patient receives 11 times the normal amount of oxygen compared to ambient breathing air. This increases the amount of oxygen carried by the blood stream to all parts of the body,” he continued. “When properly applied, HBOT effectively helps promote healing and decreases infection, benefiting the patient through increased blood flow to injured tissue, formation of new blood vessels, reduced swelling, fighting infection by destroying anaerobic organisms, increases new bone formation, and reduces the effects of some toxic substances”

Currently, the NHS Wound Center has only one hyperbaric chamber. With each treatment taking two hours, the center is limited to treating only 4 patients per day. In an area where diabetes and heart disease run rampant, the additional chamber will allow the center to see double the number of patients needing treatment.

“Since opening the Wound Center, we have had great success in treating patients with this modality,” said Carroll. “We have saved limbs through the healing of long-term and recurrent diabetic foot ulcers; we have witnessed the regeneration and support of damaged tissue and bone from radiation, and we have even provided complete reversal of chronic bone infections.”

Hyperbaric oxygen treatments is but one of several modalities offered through the advanced Wound Management Center at NHS. Other adjunctive therapies include compression therapy, wound debridement, skin grafting, specialized dressings and negative pressure wound therapy. The center also offers complete wound management of arterial, diabetic and neuropathic ulcers, problematic surgical wounds, traumatic wounds, venous stasis ulcers and radiation injuries.

“We include a lot of medical professionals who review each case and create a specialized treatment plan for each patient,” said Carroll. “Our wound team includes a general surgeon, a wound care certified registered nurse, a dedicated medical assistant, and trained hyperbaric technicians.”

Patients wishing to be seen for a consultation and evaluation should call the Wound Management Center at (918) 458-2487. The center accepts Medicare and most private insurances. Patients with Indian Health Services will first need a referral.

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