



Rao Clinic Wound Care & HBO

Frequently Asked Questions for Patients & Caregivers

1. What is the difference between advanced wound care and HBO?

At Rao Clinic, we offer personalized care to help wounds heal, reduce complications, and support limb preservation.

Service	What it involves
Advanced Wound Care	Direct treatment of slow-to-heal wounds through wound cleaning, specialized dressings, blood flow assessment, and treatments such as compression or pressure relief when appropriate.
Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBO)	Breathing 100% medical oxygen inside a pressurized chamber to increase oxygen delivery to damaged tissue and support healing in eligible patients.

Your care plan may include advanced wound care, HBO, or both. HBO can also treat certain conditions that do not involve an open wound, including delayed radiation injury.

2. What types of wounds do you treat?

Our team evaluates and treats a variety of complex or slow-to-heal wounds, including:

- **Diabetic foot ulcers:** Open sores on the feet associated with diabetes.
- **Venous leg ulcers:** Wounds caused by problems with blood returning from the legs to the heart.
- **Arterial ulcers:** Wounds caused by reduced blood flow to the affected area.
- **Pressure injuries:** Skin and tissue damage caused by prolonged pressure, sometimes called bedsores.
- **Non-healing surgical wounds:** Surgical incisions that have not healed as expected.
- **Radiation-related wounds:** Skin or tissue damage associated with previous radiation treatment.

We assess your wound, medical history, and factors that may affect healing to create a treatment plan tailored to your needs.

3. Who may benefit from HBO?

HBO may be recommended for certain conditions, including:

- Selected diabetic foot or leg wounds that meet specific clinical criteria.
- Compromised or failing skin grafts and flaps with an inadequate blood supply.
- **Chronic refractory osteomyelitis:** Bone infections that persist despite standard treatment.
- **Delayed radiation injury:** Damage to soft tissue or bone that develops after radiation treatment.

Our medical team will determine whether HBO is appropriate for you. Having one of these conditions does not automatically qualify you for treatment or insurance coverage.

4. How does HBO support healing?

During HBO, you breathe 100% medical oxygen at a pressure higher than normal atmospheric pressure. This allows more oxygen to dissolve into your blood and reach tissues that need it.

For appropriate conditions, HBO can help:

- Support tissue repair and new blood vessel growth.
- Reduce swelling.
- Improve the ability of white blood cells to fight infection.

When used for wound healing, HBO works alongside your prescribed wound care and other necessary treatments. Results vary based on your condition and overall health.

5. What happens at my first appointment?

Your initial evaluation includes a review of your medical history, medications, symptoms, and previous treatments. Our team will assess your wound or condition, discuss treatment options, and explain the next steps.

If HBO is recommended, we will review its benefits, risks, and safety requirements. Our administrative team will also help verify insurance benefits and obtain authorization when required.

6. What is an HBO treatment session like?

You will lie comfortably inside our clear, single-person Sechrist 3600H hyperbaric chamber. You may rest or watch television through the clinic's approved setup.

As the chamber pressure changes, you may feel fullness in your ears, similar to flying in an airplane. Our staff will explain how to relieve this pressure.

Clinical staff monitor you throughout treatment, and you can communicate with them while inside the chamber.

7. How long does treatment take?

HBO treatment commonly lasts approximately 90–120 minutes, depending on your prescribed plan. Allow additional time for preparation and checks before and after treatment.

Many conditions require a series of sessions over several weeks. Your provider will explain your schedule and reassess your progress throughout treatment.

8. Are there risks or special preparation requirements?

Possible side effects include ear or sinus discomfort, temporary vision changes, and low blood sugar in some patients with diabetes. Rare but serious complications can occur.

For safety, only approved clothing and items may enter the chamber. Our team will provide instructions about personal care products, electronics, and other restricted items before treatment.

9. Will insurance cover my care?

Coverage depends on your insurance plan, diagnosis, and the treatment recommended. Some services require a referral or prior authorization.

Our team can help you understand your benefits and any expected out-of-pocket costs. Insurance verification or authorization does not guarantee payment.

10. How do I schedule an evaluation?

If you or a loved one has a slow-to-heal wound or a condition that may benefit from HBO, contact us to schedule an evaluation.

Rao Clinic Advanced Wound Care & Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

Address: 1700 Kildaire Farm Road, Suite 110, Cary, NC 27511

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Website: www.raoclinic.org

For referring providers: Please fax referrals and supporting medical records to (919) 897-5980.