



### **How accurate is the pulse oximeter?**

- A pulse oximeter may also be less accurate with very low oxygen saturation levels (**below 80%**) or with very dark skin.
- False high readings are also always obtained from smokers - readings are affected for up to four hours after smoking a cigarette (Dobson, 1993).
- Most oximeters give a reading 2% over or 2% under what your saturation would be if obtained by an arterial blood gas. For example, if your oxygen saturation reads 92% on the pulse oximeter, it may be actually anywhere from 90 to 94%.
  
- <https://www.thoracic.org/patients/patient-resources/resources/pulse-oximetry.pdf>
- [Pulse Oximetry | Measuring Oxygen Status | Nursing Times](#)
- [Pulse oximetry \(nih.gov\)](#)