

PATIENT EDUCATION



CPAP Guide



 **Medicor**[®]
HEALTHCARE

Breathe Easier.

Making CPAP A Positive Experience

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure, or CPAP, is the most effective treatment for obstructive sleep apnea. A decision to use CPAP is a major step forward in the pursuit of a healthier life. The successful use of CPAP will help you breathe easier, sleep better and live healthier. Using CPAP can be a positive experience if you keep these key points in mind:

Commitment

CPAP is not a quick fix for your problem. It involves a long-term commitment to improve your sleep and your health.

Communication

Stay in close communication with both your sleep doctor and your CPAP supplier. Ask a lot of questions and seek help when you need it.

Consistency

Use CPAP all night, every night and for every nap. You will receive the maximum health benefits from CPAP when you use it every time that you sleep. This will also make it easier for your body to adjust to the treatment.

Correction

The first machine and mask that you try may not be the best ones for you. Work with your sleep doctor and your CPAP supplier to make corrections to your equipment selection. Ask about trying a different type of machine or mask if you have ongoing problems. Make sure that your mask is a good fit and learn to use your equipment properly.

Challenge

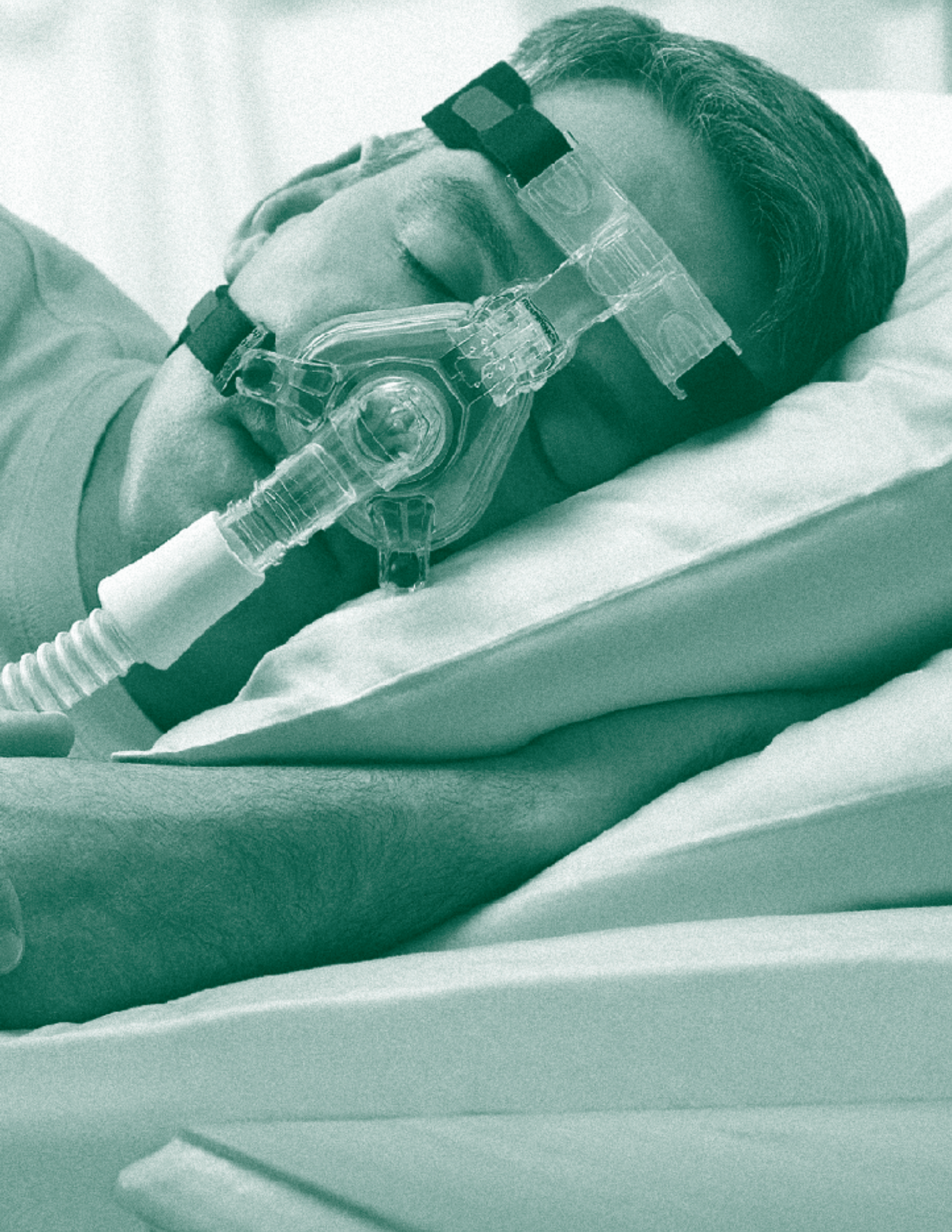
Tell a family member or close friend to ask you each morning if you used your CPAP the previous night. Have someone who can challenge you to give your best effort.

Connection

Your adjustment to CPAP will be easier if you are able to connect with others who use the same treatment. Ask your sleep doctor if there is a support group in your area for people who have sleep apnea, or look for one on the Internet.

Comfort

Increase your level of comfort by using a saline nasal spray, decongestant or heated humidifier if CPAP irritates your nose, mouth or throat. Use your unit's "ramp" setting to slowly get used to the air pressure level. See if there are soft pads you can buy that will fit over your mask straps.





Twelve Tips for CPAP

- 1.** Begin using your CPAP for short periods of time during the day while you watch TV or read.
- 2.** Use the “ramp” setting on your unit so the air pressure increases slowly to the proper level.
- 3.** Use CPAP every night and for every nap. Using it less often reduces the health benefits and makes it harder for your body to get used to it.
- 4.** Newer CPAP models are virtually silent. However, if you find the sound of your CPAP machine to be bothersome, place the unit under the bed to dampen the sound.
- 5.** Make small adjustments to your mask, tubing, straps and headgear until you get the right fit.
- 6.** Use a saline nasal spray to ease mild nasal congestion.
- 7.** Take a nasal decongestant to relieve more severe nasal or sinus congestion.
- 8.** Use a heated humidifier that fits your CPAP model to enhance your breathing comfort.
- 9.** Try a system that uses nasal pillows if traditional masks give you problems.
- 10.** Clean your mask, tubing and headgear once a week.
- 11.** Regularly check and replace the filters for your CPAP unit and humidifier.
- 12.** Work closely with your sleep doctor and CPAP supplier to make sure that you have the machine, mask and air pressure settings that work best for you.

Maintaining Your Equipment

Each Morning

- Wipe the nasal interface (mask, pillows, etc.) with a warm, wet cloth.
- Empty the water chamber if you are using a heated humidifier. Open the chamber and place it on a clean towel to dry.

Weekly

- Soak the tubing, mask/pillows and humidifier chamber in mild dishwashing liquid. Rinse well and hang to dry.
- If you are using a heated humidifier with your machine to relieve dryness, it is very important to keep it clean. After washing the chamber, soak it in a solution of 1-part white vinegar to 3-parts water for 30 minutes and rinse again.

Filter Maintenance

All machines have filters. Please adhere to these general and manufacturer's recommendations:

- **For Sponge Filters:** Brush the filter clean and then rinse it well in warm water. Allow the filter to air dry before reinsertion. Replace the filter every 3-6 months or when it appears to be deteriorating. (Respironics)
- **For HEPA (White-Colored) Filters:** Inspect the HEPA filter during the weekly cleaning of the sponge filter. Replace the filter every 4-6 weeks or when it is visibly dingy and/or soiled. (Respironics)
- **For Fiber Filters:** Inspect the filter and brush it clean. Replace the filter every 3-6 months or when it is visibly dingy and/or soiled. (ResMed)
- Use distilled water for your humidifier. This is available for purchase at most local stores for under \$1.00.
- Keep the outside of your filter clean with a damp cloth. Always use a travel bag when transporting your equipment.

Note: Medicare, along with most commercial insurance providers, will allow you to receive replacement supplies throughout the year. Call Medicor Healthcare at 1-800-250-4468 to place an order. It is our pleasure to serve you. Thank you for your trust in us.





Frequently Asked Questions

What Is CPAP?

CPAP is a medical device that delivers a steady, gentle flow of air delivered through a soft, pliable nasal mask worn over the nose. It is the most effective non-invasive treatment available for obstructive sleep apnea.

How Does It Work?

CPAP relieves obstructive sleep apnea by using an “air splint” to keep the airway open. The airflow splits the soft tissues in the throat, keeping it from collapsing at night when the muscles relax.

Do I Have To Breathe Harder To Get Enough Air In and Out?

No. In fact, it is easier to breathe while wearing CPAP if you do not consciously try to breathe. CPAP will feel strange at first. However, after wearing it for a while, breathing will get much easier.

How Often Do I Have To Wear CPAP?

CPAP should be worn during every sleep period, even during a daytime nap. Sometimes, the pressure can be lowered or the CPAP can be discontinued after weight loss. Your physician can advise you on your particular situation.

Are There Any Side Effects Associated With CPAP?

Yes. Although side effects may be very annoying, they are minimal considering the benefits. Some of the most common side effects are a dry mouth and a dry/runny nose. Keep a glass of water close to the bedside and take sips throughout the night to relieve a dry mouth. An over-the-counter saline nasal spray may be used to moisten the nasal passages before bed. A humidifier may also be helpful.

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