



Patient Information

10 Keys to CPAP Success

(sleepeducation.com)

CPAP is the most effective treatment for obstructive sleep apnea. 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:

1. *Commitment:* CPAP is not a quick fix for your problem. It involves a long-term commitment to improve your sleep and your health.
2. *Communication:* Stay in close communication with both your sleep doctor and your CPAP supplier. Ask lots of questions and seek help when you need it.
3. *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.
4. *Correction:* The first mask you try may not be the best one for you. Work with your sleep doctor to make corrections to your equipment selection. Ask about trying a different type of mask if you have ongoing problems. Make sure that your mask is a good fit and learn to use your equipment properly.
5. *Challenge:* Tell a family member or close friend to ask you each morning if you used your CPAP the previous night. Have someone to challenge you to give it your best effort.
6. *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.
7. *Comfort:* Increase your level of comfort by using a saline 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.
8. *Cleaning:* Clean your mask, tubing and headgear on a regular basis. Put this time in your schedule so that you don't forget to do it. Check and replace the filters for your CPAP unit and humidifier.
9. *Completion:* Although you are never finished with CPAP therapy, you should reward yourself by celebrating the completion of your first month of treatment. Expect this first month to be your hardest period of adjustment. It will involve some trial and error as you find the machine, mask and pressure settings that are right for you.
10. *Continuation:* After your first month of treatment, continue to make a daily commitment to use your CPAP all night, every night and for every nap.