

CPAP/BIPAP Overview

What is Sleep Apnea?

Sleep Apnea is a disorder occurring during sleep in which breathing stops.

What causes Sleep Apnea?

When we are awake, the muscles which surround the upper airway keep the air passages open. When someone with OSA falls asleep, the muscles relax and the tongue drops towards the back of the throat. In this relaxed state, the simple effort of breathing is enough to pull the tissues of the soft palate and the tongue together causing a total collapse of the airway. This airway blockage reduces or stops the flow of air into the lungs. When breathing stops for more than 10-15 seconds, it is called APNEA.

What are the symptoms of Sleep Apnea?

When the airway is blocked, the oxygen in the bloodstream drops signaling the brain to get more air into the lungs. This increased effort to breath results in a brief awakening which deprives the body of the beneficial effects of deep sleep. Signs of poor sleep can include snoring, excessive daytime drowsiness, morning headaches, poor memory, irritability, personality changes and depression.

What is the treatment for Sleep Apnea?

Your Physician may prescribe a CPAP or BIPAP device for you. These devices deliver air pressure through a mask while a patient sleeps. CPAP is pressure to help your airways stay inflated during sleep. BIPAP also has a second pressure when you exhale that makes it more comfortable to breathe. CPAP/BIPAP helps people get a good night's rest and avoid daytime fatigue and drowsiness. You will have more energy to do the things you like to do, wake up feeling more refreshed, and possibly help avoid future illnesses such as heart disease, high blood pressure or stroke.

What are my mask options?

Fitting of masks is a special and sometimes very time-consuming process. There are multiple manufactures of masks and many sizes. A mask fitting is geared toward patient comfort and the seal around the mask.

The 3 most common types of masks are:

Nasal Mask – Covers the entire nose

Nasal Pillows – Small "pillows" sit just inside the nostrils

Full Face Mask – Covers the entire mouth and nose

What if I get home and I don't like my mask?

Our respiratory care practitioners (RCPs) have many years of experience fitting masks and other interfaces for patients with sleep apnea. You should give any new mask at least 2 weeks before thinking about changing it as it takes time to acclimate to the machine and the mask.

How do I use my device?

1. Fill the humidifier to the correct level as described in the owner's manual. Distilled water is preferred but, you may also use bottled or reverse osmosis water. Empty remaining water every 1-2 days and let air dry so it doesn't grow any bacteria.
2. Attach the tubing to the CPAP/BIPAP machine at one end and to the mask/pillows at the other end.
3. Put on the headgear and mask or nasal pillows and adjust for comfort.
4. Make sure the mask/pillows are snug around your nose but not too tight.
5. Turn the machine on and breathe normally through your nose. (slow deep breaths)
6. Lie down and adjust the tubing so it is free to move if you turn in your sleep.
7. Adjust the mask and headgear/pillows until you have a comfortable fit and there are no airflow leaks into your eyes. If air is blowing in your eyes, readjust the headgear straps.
8. Turn the machine off in the morning after you awaken. Take off your mask/pillows

How do I clean my device?

Every day:

1. Wipe off or wash Mask or Pillows (the part that touches your face). This removes the oily residue from your skin that can cause your mask to leak.
2. Empty Humidifier Chamber and refill with Fresh Water.

Every Week:

1. Disconnect the tubing, humidifier, mask (or pillows) and foam filter (if applicable) and gently wash in a solution of hot water and mild soap (NO antibacterial or scented soaps. We recommend Dove, Ivory or baby shampoo). Other soaps have a chemical that can leave a film on the plastic or irritate your skin.
2. Rinse thoroughly and air dry or attach to the CPAP/BIPAP unit and turn it on to "Blow Dry" your hose. Shake out any excess water and hang hose up to drip dry.
3. After it's dry place the mask or pillows in a zip-lock bag to keep dust away from it after cleaning.
4. ONLY use Distilled, bottled or R.O. water in your humidifier chamber!

Reminders:

1. If your machine has a white paper filter, this does NOT get washed.
2. Do NOT machine wash the headgear. Gently squeeze out any excess water and air dry to avoid stretching the material.
3. NO antibacterial or scented soaps.

Dealing with mask leaks:

Mask leaks are very common and may be caused from various causes. Mask problems are the most common complaint from PAP users.

- First make sure the mask is properly assembled. After cleaning the mask may not be put back together and will leak or not seal to your face properly.
- Is the cushion torn? Replace the cushions twice per month for nasal masks and pillows and once per month for full face masks.
- Has the headgear worn and lost its elasticity? Replace the headgear every 6 months.
- Is your face clean before using your mask? Sometimes natural oils or soiled skin may affect the ability to seal the mask to your skin. Wash your face before bed.
- Do you use face cream before bed? Some beauty products can interfere with the seal of your mask. Try using a mask liner. Contact us for pricing and product information.
- Is your mask adjusted properly? Remember to adjust the headgear with the PAP unit on at full pressure to adjust your mask, *then* use the ramp feature. You should adjust your mask while lying down as your face changes shape in different positions.

Helpful Hints:

- Make sure bedding, curtains, or other things are not blocking the filter or vents of your machine.
- Wash your face before putting on your mask. Normal oils in your skin can shorten the life of the mask and lead to more leaks.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and cool.
- If your machine has a pressure delay (ramp), this can make it easier to fall asleep with your CPAP/BIPAP. Your Respiratory Therapist can show you how this works. As you get adjusted to the CPAP, you may prefer to start at full pressure instead of using the ramp.
- When traveling by commercial airline, the carrying case is for carry-on ONLY. It will not protect the system if put through checked baggage and the warranty may not cover damage from airlines.
- For security stations, there is a note at the bottom of the machine identifying it as a medical device. It might be helpful to bring the owner's manual and a copy of the prescription along with you for airport security personnel. Your PAP device is a prescribed medical device and must be allowed on the plane with you as a second carry-on item.
- If the nasal pillows irritate your nose, put some K-Y Jelly around your nostrils before putting the pillows to your nostrils or saline spray in each nostril before using cpap. DO NOT USE VASOLINE or any other product with oil in it as it will break down the silicone.
- Some electric companies offer a rebate on your electric bill for having a cpap machine or other medical device. Check with SRP or APS to see if you may qualify.
- Do not use any extension cords for CPAP/BIPAP machines.

Tips for Better Sleep:

- Go to bed & wake up at the same times throughout the week, including weekends
- Use your bedroom for sleep, sex and times of illness only; do not watch TV or eat in bed
- Avoid napping during the day
- Exercise regularly, but not within 3 to 4 hours of bedtime
- Keep a regular schedule with meals, medications, chores and other activities
- Avoid large meals, caffeine, nicotine and alcohol close to bedtime
- Manage stress by refusing to worry or with relaxation exercises before bedtime
- Establish a relaxing pre-sleep ritual, such as a warm bath, light bedtime snack or ten minutes of reading
- Sleep in a dark, quiet, cool and comfortable room

Mask/Pillow Desensitization Techniques:

If you find you are having trouble adjusting or are feeling claustrophobic, you may need to take a little time to desensitize to the device and mask. Rather than immediately beginning CPAP at the prescribed pressure, first become acquainted with the mask and the machine.

1. First start by holding the mask on your face without being attached to the tubing to adjust to having it on your face. Turn on the machine using the ramp setting (the lowest pressure).
2. Hold the mask loosely against your face for at least 1 minute or more.
3. When comfortable with the mask in place, loosely strap the mask to face, then adjust tighter until the leaks disappear.
4. Once comfortable with the lowest pressure, allow the pressure to slowly build up to the desired level.
5. Breathe with the mask while it is ramping up while sitting upright.
6. When comfortable with this, try to lie down with the mask in place.
7. If at any time the pressure starts to feel overwhelming, turn the unit off and back on to reset the pressure back to the lowest setting.

It is usually most beneficial to do this away from the bedroom. It is often helpful if you wear the mask while doing something relaxing, such as watching TV or listening to music, preferably not just before bedtime. Do this for a while each day, slowly increasing the amount of time you wear the mask until you can tolerate it.

You may need to wear the mask with the CPAP machine turned on for a short time each day as well until comfortable with it.

You can also practice using the machine turned on at a low pressure (i.e. with the ramp feature turned on) while they are awake and doing something relaxing for an hour or 2 each day or evening until they can breathe with the machine.

Using it for short naps during the day can also be beneficial and allows the patient to notice progress in getting acclimated to CPAP. Continual encouragement at all stages of CPAP use and desensitization is helpful to patients.

Frequently asked questions about CPAP/BIPAP therapy for sleep apnea

Q. What are my alternatives to CPAP?

A. There are several alternatives to PAP for sleep apnea including surgery and oral appliances, however, please consult with your Sleep Disorder Specialist or physician for a discussion of these options as they apply to you.

Q. Is CPAP or BIPAP portable?*

A. CPAP/BIPAP is portable and you can carry the equipment in one bag. The flow generator can be operated on 110 volt, 240 volts or even a 12-volt system depending on the machine. The humidifier can be operated with either 110 volts or 240 volts. The Humidifier should not be used with 12 volt adaptor. The heat should be turned off. To make sure your machine is compatible outside the US on the bottom it will say 100-240V. *(Battery power for these devices is not covered by Insurance)*

Q. Do I have to wear it (CPAP or BIPAP) for the rest of my life?

A. Yes, you will need to wear it until you no longer have sleep apnea. Most patients need CPAP treatment for a lifetime. Your sleep provider will discuss re-evaluation and discontinuing your PAP therapy.

Q. Who do I call if my CPAP/BIPAP is not working properly?

A. If the equipment is under warranty it may be repaired at little or no cost to you. If not under warranty, we can send the machine to the manufacturer for an estimate and let you decide if you want it repaired or not, based on the charge to you. We handle all warranty issues quickly and efficiently. *(VRS may rent or loan at no charge equipment to our patients while their own equipment is being repaired. You should not go without your therapy while your equipment is being repaired.)*

Q. What if I have allergies?

A. Most CPAP machines filters air through HEPA and/or pollen filters. Therefore, air you will be breathing will be cleaner and will most likely not have an allergenic effect.

Q. What can be done about sore/dry throat or stuffy nose?

A. Increasing the heat and humidity on your humidifier may address comfort regarding dry throat or stuffy nose. If you are opening your mouth during the night, a chinstrap (elastic band) or Full Face mask may be used to close your mouth. In severe cases your sleep specialist may prescribe a decongestant.

Q. What if I'm a mouth breather?

A. A chinstrap or Full-Face Mask can be used to help keep your mouth closed. Many people find they cease to be a mouth breather with the use of the CPAP and that PAP therapy allows them easier breathing through their nose eliminating the need for mouth breathing.

Q. How do I get rid of water in my tube?

A. Water in the tube is due to condensation. The difference in temperature between the humidifier on your device and the cool air in your bedroom surrounding the tubing causes water to collect in your tubing and mask. Try insulating the tubing during the cooler months. Warm up the room temperature or turn down the heated humidifier. Place the equipment and especially the humidifier lower than the head of your bed to allow the condensed water to roll back into the humidifier canister.

*The CPAP units used in the home do not have battery back-ups. Remove your mask when power goes off. You will open your mouth and breathe easily. You will not be able to continue with your therapy until the power returns. Some people in rural areas with frequent power outages use generators or a battery backup system.

There are battery packs available for most of the devices. At this time no insurance covers the battery and the cost is between \$300-\$700 depending on the device. Alternatively, they can be adapted for use with a 12 volt car battery via an adapter for about \$100. You may purchase the clips or other adapters from VRS. You can also use an inverter of your choice.

CONTINUED COVERAGE NOTICE

PLEASE NOTE: YOU HAVE 90 DAYS FROM TODAY TO MEET THIS CRITERIA—
NOT MEETING IT REQUIRES YOU TO START OVER, INCLUDING ANOTHER SLEEP STUDY IN THE SLEEP LAB.

You will not be eligible for any supplies until compliance is met.

If you require supplies prior to meeting this criteria, you will be responsible for payment.

- Use your device **EVERY NIGHT!** Use your device **DURING NAPS!** Use your device **ANYTIME YOU ARE SLEEPING!** When you sleep, you may experience a decrease in breathing. Your device prevents this from happening.
- You **MUST** use your device a **MINIMUM OF 4 HOURS IN A 24 HR PERIOD FOR THE FIRST 90 DAYS.** The time frame resets at 12 noon (You must meet a minimum of 4 hours a night for at least 21 days in any 30 -day period for your insurance to continue payment for your device).
- Schedule a **FACE TO FACE FOLLOW UP VISIT WITH YOUR DOCTOR.** This cannot be done any sooner than **31 DAYS** from setup **FOR A CPAP AND 61 DAYS** from setup **FOR A BIPAP.** If it is not in the correct timeframe, you will have to make another appointment.
- **DISCUSS** with your doctor the **BENEFITS** you have or may be experiencing from using the **CPAP/BIPAP DEVICE.** Do you sleep more soundly? Waking less to use the restroom? Feeling more rested? More daytime energy and less fatigue? These can all be benefits of the machine.
- Please let us know if you experience problems, so we can help you.

_____ **ATTENTION: If your insurance is Medicare, Medicaid, BCBS, Cigna, or any Medicare Advantage plan; your insurance requires the above criteria by 90 days and sometimes until the machine is paid in full.**

Failing to meet compliance criteria listed above may result in you becoming financially responsible for the equipment you take home today.

CPAP--31 DAYS *after* setup FOLLOW UP WITH DOCTOR (No Sooner)

BIPAP/ASV--61 DAYS *after* setup FOLLOW UP WITH DOCTOR (No Sooner)

WHEN TO REPLACE CPAP/BIPAP SUPPLIES

In order to receive maximum benefit from your CPAP/BIPAP therapy, it is crucial to replace your supplies regularly. Like many other frequently used health products, such as a toothbrush or razor, CPAP accessories will deteriorate and cease to function optimally.

Listed below are the manufacturer's recommended replacement schedules for each item. Most insurance companies have adopted the same replacement schedule to determine coverage eligibility.

Masks

- Replace every 90 days
 - *Material loses elasticity over time which causes air to leak.*

Headgear

- Replace every 6 months
 - *Elastic in the headgear can lose tension over time resulting in a loss of pressure.*
 - *Traps bacterial from sweat and moisture that regular cleaning cannot eliminate.*

Cushions/Pillows

- Replace every 2 weeks
 - *Deterioration caused by natural oils and acids in the skin cause discomfort and air leaks.*

Full Face Seals

- Replace every month
 - *Deterioration caused by natural oils and acids in the skin cause discomfort and air leaks.*

Filters

- Disposable – replace every 2 weeks
 - *These filters protect you from airborne particles, dust and bacteria and wear out or may become clogged (especially in the dusty Arizona climate).*
- Re-usable – replace every 6 months
 - *These filters can be washed and reused for up to 6 months (not all devices have reusable filters)*

Tubing

- Replace every 90 days
 - *Tubing can collect bacteria that regular cleaning cannot eliminate*
 - *Tubing can develop microscopic pores that can cause leakage.*

Water Chamber

- Replace every 6 months
 - *Over time, bacteria and contaminants build up which regular cleaning cannot eliminate.*

Chin Strap

- Replace every 6 months
 - *Elastic in the chin strap can lose tension over time and cease to function.*

HOW TO ORDER REPLACEMENT CPAP/BIPAP SUPPLIES

We offer 4 convenient ways to reorder your supplies!

1. Call and place your order on our dedicated reorder voicemail. Just call the number listed below for your area and leave your name, date of birth and the items you would like to order or you can just say "all supplies", and we will ship your order in 2-3 business days. If there have been any changes to your address or Insurance Plan, please leave that information on the recording. If you would like to speak to someone, you can request a return phone call. *(Some Health Plans require that we speak to you in person, so you may receive a phone call from one of our re-order specialists even if you don't request a return call)*
 - Metro Phoenix: (480) 219-0372
 - Tucson Area: (520) 843-0175
 - Prescott/Cottonwood: (928) 717-1560
 - Omaha: (402) 991-1950

2. Email your order to:
 - Metro Phoenix: supplies@valleyo2.com
 - Tucson: supplies@valleyo2.com
 - Prescott/Cottonwood: supplies@alliancehc.com
 - Omaha: supplies@focusrespiratory.com

3. Utilize our Interactive Voice Recognition Service *(not all Insurance Plans are eligible for this service)*
 - You will receive a telephone call when you are eligible for new supplies based on the replacement schedule as determined by your insurance company.
 - If someone other than the patient answers the phone, they will have the ability to pause the call to have the patient come to the phone, or they can specify that the patient is not available.
 - If the call is unable to reach the patient, we will call again or leave a message.
 - The call is short and easy for you to answer/respond to simple questions.
 - The call will ask you:
 - Your Year of Birth (to verify your "identity")
 - If you are still using your CPAP or BiLevel Equipment (If you specify that you are not using your equipment, the call will end and we will contact you personally)
 - If you'd like to place an order for supplies and if so; What supplies you'd like to order (Mask, Tubing, Filters, Etc.)
 - If you do not need supplies, the call will end and we will call again in a few months
 - If you do place an order for supplies, the call will ask if you'd like us to contact you personally to discuss your therapy and;
 - The call will ask if you have had any changes to your Physician, Insurance or Address, and if so, we will reach out directly to obtain the additional information
 - Once you complete the call, we may contact you to collect any co-payment or deductible as required by your Insurance.
 - Rest assured that we still want to talk to you when you want to talk to us!

4. Sign up for our Reorder Portal (please send an email to supplies@valleyo2.com to ensure we have your email address on file)
 - You will receive an email invitation to register through our web portal.
 - Once you register, you will receive a reminder email when you are eligible for new supplies based on the replacement schedule as determined by your insurance company.
 - Simply log in and place your order. Your supplies will arrive at your door in 3-7 business days!

*If you have any questions about these options, please do not hesitate to contact us.
We look forward to serving you and as always, thank you for choosing Valley Healthcare Group!*