

Caring for Your CPAP or BiPAP Machine

With proper use of your CPAP or BiPAP you will decrease your risk for heart attack, stroke, and high blood pressure. This handout will tell you how to care for your CPAP or BiPAP machine.

Caring for Your Equipment

We strongly suggest that you:

- Replace your mask or nasal pillows as needed. Replace the complete interface (including headgear) as needed. Contact your CPAP vendor or insurance company.
- Replace or clean the filter on your machine monthly. If you live in a dusty area or with pets, you may need to clean it more often.
- Replace the hoses if you find leaks or the connectors no longer work well.

Cleaning Your Equipment

Wash your mask, nasal pillows, and humidifier once a week. Make sure that standing water can drip out of all the tubing and allow it to dry completely.

When you wear your CPAP or BiPAP each night, the air goes in and passes through the machine, filter, tubing, and mask. The exhaled air goes back into the mask, tubing and machine. Exhaled air has moisture from your body. This moisture can cause germs to grow. If you do not clean your equipment it could begin to grow bacteria. This could cause your equipment to smell bad and break.

Traveling with Your Machine

Always carry your CPAP or BiPAP machine on the plane using the travel bag. This will help prevent it from being lost, stolen, or damaged.

You do not need to travel with distilled water. Using tap water for a few days won't hurt your machine. If you would prefer to keep using distilled water, look for bottled drinking water that is labeled distilled, deionized, or demineralized.

If you have nasal dryness, use a nasal saline spray 2 – 3 times each day. You may also use a nasal gel (Ayr[®], CPAP moisture therapy, KY Jelly[®], etc.).

When you leave the country, **write down and keep a copy of** the toll-free phone number of your home health supplier in case you have problems. Many countries use different plug ins. Know whether your machine uses multiple voltages (110 volts/60hz and 220 volts/50hz) or if you will need to get a voltage converter. Also, see a travel supply store for the proper plug adapter for the country you will be going to.

If you will use your machine from a 12-volt DC power source, contact your supplier or check your maker of the machine's website to find out how to obtain and use the needed accessories.

When to Call

If you start to have any of these symptoms below, you should schedule a follow-up visit with Wisconsin Sleep.

- A weight change (gain or loss) of more than 10% of your current weight.
- Return of snoring while you are using CPAP or BiPAP machine.
- If you start to have heart problems, mainly congestive heart failure (CHF) or atrial fibrillation (AF).
- If you have a stroke, mini-stroke, or transient ischemic attack (TIA).
- If you notice the same kind of symptoms you had before you started on treatment for sleep apnea.

Who to Call

Wisconsin Sleep
(608) 232-3333

Call your home health care company for any questions about your equipment or to request more supplies. They are your best, first contact for any questions or concerns.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2020 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7066