



ENT

Associates

Making sense of your family's
hearing, sinus and throat problems

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) Therapy

Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is the most effective treatment for obstructive sleep apnea. A decision to use the 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.

Making CPAP Therapy a Positive Experience:

- ◆ **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 lots 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 one 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 how 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 to challenge you to give it your best effort.
- ◆ **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.

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- ◆ **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 and humidifier.
- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **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.

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