

Bedside Tales

VitalAire CPAP
Support program

An Expert Explains

Sleep apnoea is well established as a treatable risk factor for the development of cardiovascular disease such as heart attacks and strokes. Despite being around for 30 years CPAP remains the treatment of choice for obstructive sleep apnoea, abolishing apnoeic events in most people and improving their quality of life. As anyone who has been involved with CPAP treatment knows, the **major problem is patient acceptance and long term adherence to treatment**. Long term, consistent use is essential if it is going to be effective at managing the symptoms and the risks associated with sleep apnoea.

In 2009 the Australasian Sleep Association (ASA) published a position paper called "Best Practice Guidelines for Provision of CPAP Therapy". Amongst other recommendations it reiterated the findings that **early and good quality follow-up is essential to achieve good adherence to treatment**. Ongoing CPAP care is a shared responsibility between the patient, the sleep physician, the patient's General Practitioner and importantly the supplier of the CPAP device. Whilst sleep physicians or sleep centres differ in the level of support they provide to their patients there is no doubt that the CPAP provider has a critical role in the overall process. The ASA document requires that CPAP providers educate and support their patients with particular attention to the first two weeks. Unfortunately it seems that **the first two weeks of treatment are absolutely critical to establish good habits** and if this opportunity is lost it is very hard to remedy this later. Ongoing follow-up and good communication with others involved in the patient's care is also critical to long term success.

The provision of CPAP and support of patients on CPAP is health care. Whilst CPAP is a generally safe treatment, understanding the issues that make it effective and knowing when it is not working effectively is a skill which requires knowledge and experience. **The CPAP provider has a critical role in this and like any other provider of health care services, they have a moral and ethical obligation to maintain high professional standards.**



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The importance of follow up

Follow-up is the **most important** factor in ensuring successful, compliant CPAP Therapy. Recently published research* proved that regular follow-up during the first few months of therapy:

- ✓ Increased compliance by up to 20%
- ✓ Increased the mean daily usage of therapy by 20%
- ✓ Decreased dropout rate since problems were addressed immediately
- ✓ Had a significant positive impact on long term compliance

*Damjanovic D, Eur Respir J 2009; 33:804-811

AIR LIQUIDE *Healthcare* offer comprehensive CPAP therapy support programs focused on compliance:



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Nozoil*

Nasal tissue can become dry and irritated, sometimes causing nose bleeds. Moisturising nasal tissue can help to prevent dryness and crusting from recurring.



Nozoil is an **organic oil containing all three natural forms of Vitamin E** (alpha, beta and gamma) and has been specifically designed to provide temporary relief of dry and crusting nasal tissue.

Nasal tissue can become dry and irritated from any of the following:

- ✓ While using nasal CPAP machines (used to treat snoring and sleep apnoea)
- ✓ While using long-term Oxygen therapy via nasal prongs
- ✓ In low humidity climates
- ✓ In air-conditioned environments
- ✓ After radiation treatment
- ✓ During and after a common cold
- ✓ Older people have a greater tendency toward developing dry and irritated nasal tissue

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*Always carefully read instructions before using



Body Mass Index

As your body changes, your CPAP pressure requirements may also change. Weight loss may reduce the CPAP pressure required, while weight gain often necessitates the use of higher pressures.

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a statistical measurement of body weight ratio based on a person's weight and height. It is used to estimate a healthy body weight based on a person's height.

BMI	Category
< 18.5	Underweight
18.5 - 25	Normal
25 - 30	Overweight
Above 30	Obese
Above 35	Severely obese
Above 40	Morbidly obese
Above 50	Superobese

Equipment care & maintenance

✓ Mask cleaning

You should disassemble and reassemble your mask for cleaning once a week. Your cushion or nasal pillows should be washed daily as shown by your CPAP Therapy Consultant during your education session. To clean, disassemble the mask according to manufacturer's instructions. Submerge in a bucket of water, adding a few drops of dishwashing detergent, wash well and rinse thoroughly. Headgear should be washed in a solution of mild washing powder. Rinse mask parts with clear water and let dry on a towel inside the house. Reassemble when dry. **NOTE:** Do not use bathroom pump soaps containing fragrances or oils.

✓ Chin straps

Chin straps should be washed in a mild washing laundry solution. Rinse thoroughly and let dry on a towel inside the house. Do not leave to dry in the sun.

✓ CPAP tubing

Wash your CPAP tubing weekly. The easiest method is to flush water through the tubing, adding some detergent as you do so. Rinse out the tubing with clean water. Hang up tubing and allow the water to drain from it during the day ready for use that night.

✓ Humidifier chamber cleaning

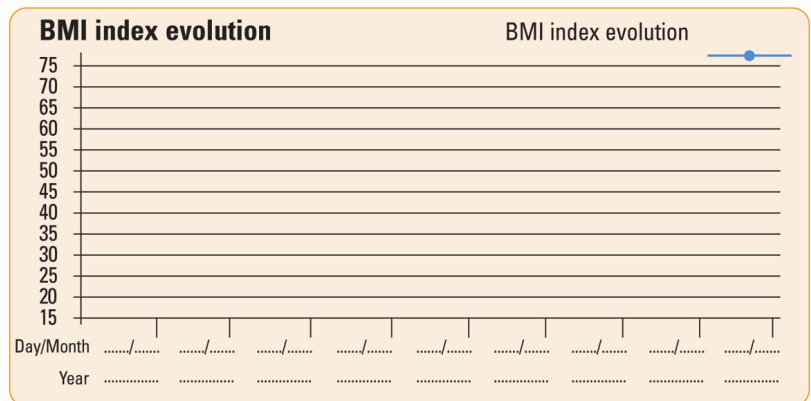
The water in the chamber needs to be replaced daily. The chamber should be taken off the machine each morning, emptied and rinsed. Fill with fresh water before using. For weekly cleaning, disassemble the chamber as shown by your CPAP therapy consultant during your education session. Immerse in a bucket of warm water with detergent and soak for 20-30 minutes, rinse with clear water and let dry on a towel inside the house.

You can soak the water chamber in 1 teaspoon of vinegar to 1 cup of water to remove any calcium deposits or buildup. Most chambers are dishwasher safe, so ask your CPAP Therapy Consultant if yours is suitable. Reassemble humidifier ready for use.

✓ CPAP machine filters

Disposable filters should be changed every 3-4 months. Do not wash disposable filters. Dispose of the used filter and replace with a new one. If you live in a very dusty environment, your filters may need to be changed more regularly. Reusable filters need to be washed once a week in warm soapy water, rinsed in clear water and allowed to dry on a towel (in the house) before fitting on the machine. The filter must always be in the machine when it is in use.

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight (kg)}}{\text{Height (m)}^2} \quad \text{eg: } \frac{84}{1.80^2} = 25.9 \text{ BMI}$$



Call **1300 36 02 02** to talk to a CPAP therapy consultant if you have any concerns that your current physical condition is impacting on your OSA.