



# I have sleep apnea. Now what?

A guide to getting the most out of your treatment

**PHILIPS**  
  
RESPIRONICS

# Equipment replacement schedule

To get the most benefit from your PAP therapy, your equipment should be replaced when necessary based on wear and tear. For example, your mask may need to be replaced if you notice it is cracked or the seal is leaking. If your tubing is torn, it needs to be replaced.

If your equipment is showing signs of wear, you may be entitled to replace it. The replacement schedule for Medicare patients is shown below. If you are not a Medicare patient, please check with your homecare provider for your individual insurance policy's replacement schedule.

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Medicare</b>	<b>My insurance plan</b>
Mask	1 per 3 months	_____
Nasal replacement cushion	2 per month	_____
Pillows replacement cushion	2 per month	_____
Full-face cushion	1 per month	_____
Headgear	1 per 6 months	_____
Chinstrap	1 per 6 months	_____
Tubing	1 per 3 months	_____
Filter, fine disposable	2 per month	_____
Filter, gross particle foam	1 per 6 months	_____
Therapy device	1 per 5 years	_____

## Follow-up and compliance goals for Medicare patients

	<b>Medicare requirement</b>	<b>My follow-up appointment date</b>
Follow-up appointment with physician	31-90 days	_____
	<b>Medicare requirement</b>	<b>My compliance goals</b>
Compliance goals	4 hours per night	____ hours per night
	30 nights of consecutive use	____ nights of consecutive use

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“It’s as simple as sleeping  
through the night.”

Throughout this brochure are quotes from actual patients sharing their thoughts on the benefits of sleep apnea treatment.



# The benefits of therapy

You have been experiencing difficulty sleeping. You may be snoring loudly, or you may be gasping or choking at night. In addition, you may be excessively tired during the day, have morning headaches, and may be depressed or irritable. After consulting with your doctor – and with the help of a sleep lab – you have been diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea.

If you have sleep apnea, your airway collapses during sleep and prevents air from getting to your lungs. You stop breathing momentarily, which causes sleep disturbance and puts a strain on your heart.

Your doctor has prescribed nasal positive airway pressure (PAP) therapy for you. PAP therapy gently blows air into your nose and/or mouth to prevent your airway from collapsing. It is a noninvasive treatment.



Obstructive sleep apnea



Positive airway pressure therapy

# How PAP therapy works

PAP therapy will relieve the airway obstruction that occurs while you sleep. PAP treatment can dramatically improve the life of someone diagnosed with sleep apnea. When you wear the system every night during sleep and optimum therapy is achieved, you may experience the following benefits of treatment:

- Increased energy level and attentiveness during the day
- Fewer morning headaches
- Reduced irritability
- Improved memory
- Less waking during the night to go to the bathroom
- Increased ability to exercise
- Increased effectiveness at home or at work
- Improved overall quality of life

You will need to use your treatment every night while you sleep. If you do not, you will return to your previous level of snoring, sleep apnea, and daytime tiredness.

Untreated sleep apnea also has been shown to co-exist with a number of other medical conditions, such as:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Heart attack
- Irregular heart beat
- Stroke
- Type 2 diabetes

Sleep apnea also may contribute to driving and work-related accidents.

Your homecare provider will assess your healthcare needs and select the proper PAP therapy equipment for you. They will set the equipment at the prescribed pressure setting(s). They will train and educate you and your family on the use, care, operation, and maintenance of the equipment.

Your device is a \_\_\_\_\_.

Your pressure level is \_\_\_\_\_.

Your mask is a \_\_\_\_\_.

“Sleep apnea doesn’t just affect patients. It affects everybody around them.”



# Getting familiar with therapy devices and masks

Before you begin treatment, it is a good idea to become familiar with your equipment, which includes a therapy device and mask. Each device and mask comes with specific user instructions. Below is some general information that is common among most therapy devices and masks. Additional information about product features and operation is available from your homecare provider, the product manual, or the resources listed in the back of this booklet. All Philips Respironics devices are made in the U.S.A.



## **CPAP therapy devices**

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) devices deliver a steady, gentle flow of air throughout the night and are a very effective treatment for sleep apnea. Your doctor prescribes one therapy pressure to open your airway, which is what your device is set to deliver throughout the night. Devices are equipped with various features that can help make therapy more comfortable. Ask your homecare provider for more details.

## **Bi-level therapy devices**

Bi-level therapy devices are set to deliver two levels of pressure during the night – a lower pressure when you breathe out (exhalation) and a higher level of pressure when you breathe in (inhalation). These devices are sometimes prescribed for patients who have trouble tolerating one constant pressure from a CPAP device. Most are equipped with various features that can help make therapy more comfortable.

“The next day was the beginning of the rest of my life.”



### Auto-CPAP therapy devices

Auto-CPAP therapy devices sense your needs and provide variable pressures throughout the night. As with the other models, auto-CPAP therapy devices are equipped with various features that can help make therapy more comfortable.

### Humidifiers

Humidifiers are designed to moisturize the air that is being delivered to you from the therapy device. There are two types of humidifiers – heated and unheated. Heated humidifiers do not heat the air, but will increase the moisture content of the air delivered. Humidifiers can help to reduce some of the side-effects of therapy, such as a dry nose. For more information on humidifiers, talk to your homecare provider.

### Tubing

The tubing (or hose) is used to carry the air from the therapy device to the mask. You should clean and inspect your tubing at least once a week to make sure it is clean, pliable, and free of tears. If you think your tubing is ready for replacement, contact your homecare provider.

### Filters

Therapy devices come with filters. Some devices come with one regular foam filter and others come with two – one regular foam filter and a white, disposable ultra-fine filter. Consult your device manual for proper maintenance of your filters.

### Masks

Masks are used to deliver the air from the therapy device to you. A comfortable mask is a key factor in being able to use your treatment daily. Therefore, finding a mask that fits you and your lifestyle is important. Most masks have built-in exhalation ports that vent your exhaled air. Talk to your homecare provider about the different masks and headgear that are available.



Once you have found a mask that works for you, it is important to maintain it properly. Consult your mask's manual for proper maintenance and cleaning instructions. Inspect your mask often for wear and tear. If you think it is ready for replacement, contact your homecare provider. If replacement is needed, most health plans provide coverage for a new mask every three to six months.

### Chinstraps

Chinstraps are an optional accessory to most masks. They wrap around the top of your head and underneath your chin to prevent your mouth from opening at night. Chinstraps may be used with a variety of nasal masks if a full-face mask (a mask that covers both the nose and mouth) is not being used.

“There is a solution to the way you are feeling without medicine, without surgery, without any invasion into your life. It's going to change your life – and it's easy to do.”

# Preparing your system for use

Here is an easy checklist to help you set up your PAP system:

- \_\_\_ Place the machine on a hard level surface close to where you sleep. Plug the machine into a standard, three-prong electrical outlet.
- \_\_\_ Check the air inlet filter to ensure it is in place and free of dust.
- \_\_\_ Connect one end of the tubing (hose) to the airflow outlet on the machine and the other end to the mask (or valve).
- \_\_\_ Turn the machine on, place the headgear over your head and the mask on your face. Verify that air is flowing continuously to the mask.
- \_\_\_ If using a humidifier, add distilled water according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- \_\_\_ If the mask has been properly fitted under PAP pressure, you may not need to adjust it further. Air should not leak between your face and the mask. A small amount of air, however, will leak out from the mask where the exhalation ports are located and is considered to be normal. There should only be minimal pressure of the mask on the face. Adjusting the mask too tightly is not only uncomfortable, but can **cause** leaks.

The homecare provider will give you instructions for the safe operation, care, and maintenance of your equipment. In addition, they may contact you several times to follow up for these reasons:

- Most homecare providers will contact you within the first few days of setting up your device to see how you are doing.
- If you are having difficulties, you may receive another contact the following day.
- After you have had your system for a week, the homecare provider will usually contact you again. At this time, you may be asked for the information stored on your machine; instructions will be given at that time.
- After one month of use, your homecare provider may check in with you to learn how your therapy is progressing.

**Remember, if you have questions or problems at any time, you should call your homecare provider.**

“Who doesn't want to be a happy family person? Who doesn't want to be a good employee? I look forward to going to work in the morning. I look forward to getting home – not so that I can get more sleep, but I felt like I'd missed out on time with the kids.”





“It’s the best thing that could have happened to me. I’m healthier. I feel better. When I wake up in the morning, you know it’s just great. It’s a feeling I haven’t had in a long time. And I don’t wake up tired. I don’t wake up cranky. And you know, I’m ready to do whatever I need to do for the day.”



## Caring for your equipment

### Daily care of equipment

- Remove the mask/nasal pillows from the headgear. Clean with warm, soapy water; rinse and let air dry.
- Never use alcohol on the mask or nasal pillows. It can harm the mask.
- Wash tubing in warm soapy water; then rinse and air dry.
- Empty the humidifier and let it air dry.
- Change the water in the humidifier.
- Always use distilled water in the humidifier to avoid mineral deposit build-up.
- Clean the humidifier chamber frequently to prevent mold growth. (Straight white vinegar may be used to clean humidifiers of deposits. Be sure to thoroughly rinse with distilled or sterile water prior to the use of the humidifier.)
- **Caution:** Do not place the humidifier or the mask into the dishwasher for cleaning.

### Weekly care

- Clean the gray/black foam filter with warm soapy water. Rinse, allow to dry, then reinstall.
- Wash headgear with warm, soapy water; rinse and let air dry. Headgear is machine washable, but it is best to wash it by hand.
- Wipe the machine with a soft, damp cloth.

### Monthly care

- Replace white disposable filter (if applicable).

### In case of breakage

Contact your homecare provider if you have any problems that you are unable to correct. Do **not** attempt to repair your device by yourself.

“The mask is like a new pair of shoes...once you break them in, you don't even know they are there when you put them on.”



## Device comfort tips

Sleep therapy technology is continually evolving, and with every new generation of equipment, new features are introduced that help to improve your therapy comfort. Consult with your homecare provider if you would like more information regarding the technology described below.

### **Ramp starting pressure**

Most devices give you the opportunity to fall asleep on a low pressure. You can choose the period of time over which the pressure gradually increases until you reach your prescribed level of pressure.

### **Pressure relief technology**

Many PAP devices include pressure relief technology that enhances traditional pressure therapy and makes it easier to exhale against the pressure delivered through the mask. In some devices, the technology also provides an easier transition from exhalation to inhalation. This feature makes breathing on the device feel more natural, making it easier for you to adapt to therapy and use it for the long-term.

### **Humidification**

Adding a humidifier to your therapy device may help to improve comfort, especially if you have a dry nose or throat. More sophisticated systems can monitor room temperature and room humidity, and adjust humidification to maintain the patient-selected relative humidity level – even when environmental conditions change. Humidifiers can add heated or cool air to your therapy.

### **Mask compatibility**

Your PAP device may perform differently depending on which mask you use. Some systems enable the device and mask to work optimally together by compensating for the airflow resistance experienced by different masks. The result is enhanced compatibility of pressure delivery to the mask.

# Mask comfort and usage tips

It is vitally important to find a mask that fits properly and is comfortable to wear. To select the right mask and to maintain its proper condition and fit, work closely with your homecare provider, who will help you with the following tips:

- A nasal mask that covers your nose is most commonly used. But if you breathe through your mouth when you sleep, a full-face mask that covers both the nose and mouth may be a better option.
- The smallest mask size that fits but does not pinch the nostrils should be used.
- The mask should be fitted while you are in a sleeping position and with air blowing at the prescribed pressure through the tubing and mask.
- Headgear should be secure but not too tight. If your mask has a forehead arm or adjustment feature, adjust that first. Adjust straps to minimize air leaks, especially into the eyes.
- The cushion should not be crushed against the face.
- Tight fit is not necessary for effective therapy. By tightening, folds are created in the material creating a path for leaks. Try loosening the mask if leaks are present.
- Mark the headgear straps with permanent marker to remember where they should be fastened.
- Remove the mask by pulling it over your head or use the quick-release clip.
- Do not block the exhalation port between the mask and the connecting tubing from the device. Position the port away from your bed partner.
- You may want to consider looping the tubing over the headboard to reduce the pull on the mask.
- If you use a full-face mask and wear dentures, remember that if your mask was fitted with your dentures in, your mask may not fit properly if worn without your dentures.

“There is no side effect with positive airway pressure that should prevent you from using it. There is a solution for any problem or excuse you come up with.”

# Solutions to common questions and problems

Question/problem	Solution
When should I start feeling better after beginning to use my PAP device?	Most patients begin feeling better within two to four weeks, though some people may take a little longer.
I have a mustache or a beard. Which mask is best to use?	Ask your homecare provider which mask will work best for you.
What if I still snore while using the PAP device?	Snoring while on PAP should not occur. If it does, contact your doctor. Your pressure level may need to be adjusted.
What if I lose or gain weight or my old symptoms reappear?	You may need to have your PAP pressure level adjusted. Contact your doctor.
As I continue to use my PAP device on a regular basis, will my medications need to be adjusted?	Please do not alter your medications without consulting your doctor.
If I need to be hospitalized for any reason, should I take my device with me and use it at night?	Yes. Also, if you are having surgery, it is important to tell the surgeon and the anesthesiologist that you are using PAP at home. You should also inform the doctor treating you for sleep apnea that you are going into the hospital.
I travel frequently. Should I use my PAP device when I travel?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is important that you use your PAP every night. Purchasing travel accessories will make it more convenient for you to travel with your PAP.</li><li>• Because of increased security measures at airports, it may be easier to travel if you have a copy of your prescription for your PAP machine with you. It also is suggested that you call your airline ahead of time and ask if there is a special screening procedure required to carry on or check your PAP device.</li></ul>
My skin seems irritated, even bruised, or I have marks on my face.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your mask may be too tight. If your mask has a forehead arm or adjustment feature try readjusting that first. Then, if necessary, readjust the headgear straps.</li><li>• You may have the wrong mask size. Consult your homecare provider for a mask fitting. Nasal pillows or a full-face mask may provide a better fit.</li></ul>
How can I tell when my mask is worn out?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Because masks are disposable, periodic replacement is needed when the mask shows signs of wear and tear.</li><li>• Inspect your mask for stiffness, cracks, or tears.</li></ul>

Question/problem	Solution
My mask seems to be leaking.	<p>It is normal for a mask to leak near the connection of the tubing. If a mask leak is occurring around your eyes or mouth, follow these steps to fix it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check all the connections.</li> <li>• If your mask has a forehead arm or adjustment feature, try readjusting that first to correct the leak.</li> <li>• If there is no improvement with the above steps, readjust the headgear straps. The mask should be as loose as possible while still creating a seal. A mask that is too tight against the face can cause leaks to occur by creating folds in the material.</li> <li>• Try another mask size or type if necessary.</li> </ul>
My mask seems to be dirty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash your mask daily. (See page 7 for more details on mask care.)</li> <li>• Wash your face nightly before putting on the mask.</li> <li>• Avoid using skin lotions before putting on your mask.</li> </ul>
It doesn't seem as though enough air is flowing to me.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check that air from the machine is blowing.</li> <li>• Check the air inlet and filter for obstruction or dust buildup.</li> <li>• Check the hose for punctures.</li> <li>• If you are still having problems, check with your homecare provider or doctor for assistance.</li> </ul>
My nose and throat are dry, my nose is congested, or I have nosebleeds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try adding heated humidification. (You will need to ask your doctor for a prescription.) You may change the temperature setting on the humidifier if you are using a heated humidifier.</li> <li>• If you have allergies, you may want to take your steroidal nasal spray prior to going to bed.</li> <li>• Try nasal saline spray before bedtime and upon awakening.</li> <li>• This condition may improve over time.</li> <li>• Consult your doctor if symptoms persist.</li> </ul>
My mouth is dry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be sleeping with your mouth open. Try a chin strap.</li> <li>• If a chin strap is not helpful, a full-face mask may be considered or you should consult with your doctor about adding heated humidification.</li> </ul>
My eyes are sore, dry, irritated, or swollen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The mask may be leaking into your eyes. Use the forehead adjuster, if applicable, to reduce leaks. Try pulling the mask away from your face and repositioning it.</li> <li>• The mask may be too tight. Readjust headgear straps.</li> </ul>
My hose fills up with water at night.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condensation builds up because the air in the room may be cooler than the air coming from the machine. To prevent this condensation from forming, try placing the tubing under the covers to warm it. You may also ask your homecare provider for a hose cover made of fleece.</li> </ul>

# Solutions to common questions and problems (cont.)

Question/problem	Solution
I have trouble falling asleep on my therapy or I feel uncomfortable when I first apply the air pressure at night.	Ask your provider if your PAP therapy device has a ramp feature. If so, use it to slowly rise to your prescribed pressure setting.
I feel gassy and bloated when I wake up in the morning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try sleeping with your head elevated.</li><li>• Try using a chin strap to prevent mouth breathing.</li><li>• This condition may improve over time.</li><li>• You may benefit from a comfort feature, such as flex pressure relief technology or auto adjust bi-level therapy, which may lower the risk of that gassy or bloated feeling.</li></ul>
It is hard to breathe out against the constant air flow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This sensation may improve over time as you adapt to positive airway pressure therapy.</li><li>• Ask your physician about comfort features, such as pressure relief technology or bi-level therapy, which makes it easier to breathe out against pressure.</li></ul>
My machine does not seem to be working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check the power cord to be sure it is firmly inserted into the back of the machine and the electrical outlet.</li><li>• Contact your homecare provider if you have any problems you are unable to correct.</li><li>• Do not attempt to repair the blower unit yourself.</li></ul>
I just can't seem to adjust to using CPAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most people will adjust to CPAP in two to four weeks. Occasionally, it may take a little longer due to changing your behavior and becoming comfortable with the device while you sleep, or readjusting your body to having a normal sleep pattern versus your previous pattern.</li><li>• Call your homecare provider or prescribing physician if you are having problems adjusting to the treatment.</li><li>• Ask your homecare provider or doctor if you are eligible to try bi-level or auto-CPAP therapy, which are available.</li><li>• Attending a patient support group, such as A.W.A.K.E. (Alert, Well, And Keeping Energetic), may provide helpful information to improve your CPAP comfort and use. A.W.A.K.E. groups can be found by calling the American Sleep Apnea Association at 1-202-293-3650 or visiting <a href="http://www.sleepapnea.org">www.sleepapnea.org</a>. Additional information also can be found on-line at the Web sites listed on the next page.</li></ul>

# Effective PAP therapy

Most importantly, remember that positive airway pressure therapy is a highly effective treatment for sleep apnea. However, this treatment has no benefit if it is not used. One reason that people may stop using PAP therapy is that they may experience some of the side effects mentioned in this booklet. Most of these side effects can be easily addressed if a health professional is made aware of questions you may have or if the user is educated about ways to manage issues that may arise.

Remember that you should not stop your therapy without the approval of your doctor. Always consult your doctor if your symptoms do not improve or if your symptoms reappear after treatment has been initiated.

## To learn more

Your homecare provider can give you a copy of “Inside OSA,” an educational video from Philips Respironics, that will help you understand your treatment. Additional information about sleep apnea, its causes and treatments can be found on several Web sites:

- Philips Respironics: [www.sleepapnea.com](http://www.sleepapnea.com)
- Sleep Well, Be Healthy Council: [www.sleepapneainfo.com](http://www.sleepapneainfo.com)
- National Sleep Foundation: [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)
- American Sleep Apnea Association: [www.sleepapnea.org](http://www.sleepapnea.org)



“When you are not just wanting sleep all the time, it makes you a better father and makes you a better husband. Makes you a better employee on the job. And, all of a sudden it’s a good cycle that perpetuates itself. And then you realize – I think this is what normal life is supposed to be like and what you’d been missing out on all of that time.”

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CAUTION: US federal law restricts these devices to sale by or on the order of a physician.

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