

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)

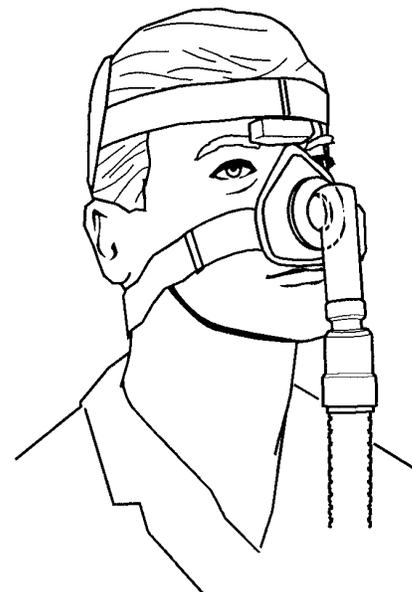


The air passages of the nose and throat of some people collapse or become blocked while they are sleeping. This airway collapse causes an obstruction and can cause breathing to stop briefly. When breathing stops for short periods of time, it is known as apnea. Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is the most common treatment for obstructive sleep apnea. This condition is diagnosed by doing a sleep study.

CPAP is used to keep the air passages open while you sleep. A small air blower in the CPAP machine pushes air through a flexible tube. The tube attaches to a mask that fits over your nose, or nose and mouth while you sleep. The constant flow of air through the tubing prevents the air passages in your nose and throat from collapsing so your breathing does not stop.

CPAP needs to be used anytime you sleep to stop the apnea from occurring. If the CPAP device is not used or is not used correctly, apnea will return. Always take your CPAP with you when traveling or if you are admitted to the hospital.

Most people find using CPAP helps them feel more rested. Wearing the mask bothers some people. Sometimes the mask can be changed or adjusted for more comfort. Some people may feel embarrassed about using the equipment. Talk to your doctor, nurse or home care company representative if you are having problems.



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Department of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine
The Ohio State University Medical Center

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