

## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT CPAP

### What is CPAP?

Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy is the first line treatment for obstructive sleep apnea. CPAP therapy keeps your airway open during the night and providing a stream of filtered air through a mask you wear while you sleep. This allows you to breathe normally throughout the night and allows your body to receive the oxygen it needs.

### What are the benefits of CPAP?

When you use CPAP each night, you will feel more alert during the day. Your mood will improve and you will have a better memory. CPAP prevents or even reverses serious health problems linked to sleep apnea such as heart disease and stroke. Your partner may also sleep better because you will stop snoring.

### What is CPAP equipment?

CPAP comes with a machine, flexible tubing, and a mask. Most machines are small – about the size of a tissue box – lightweight and relatively quiet. The tubing connects the CPAP machine to your mask. The tubing is long enough to allow you to move around or turn over in your bed.

The CPAP mask may cover only your nose or both your nose and mouth. Another option is to use “nasal pillows” which fit in your nostrils. Whichever mask you use, it is important that it fits well and is comfortable. The mask must make a seal in order to keep your airway open through the night. A good mask seal will prevent air leaks and maintain the right level of air pressure.

You can keep the CPAP machine on your nightstand or at the side of your bed. Today’s CPAP machines are portable and easy to travel with.

### What will be my CPAP setting?

Your sleep doctor will determine the right amount of air pressure needed for CPAP to treat your sleep apnea. Often, a sleep study with CPAP titration is required to determine your correct air pressure setting. All CPAP machines come with a timed pressure “ramp” setting. This starts with airflow at a very low level so that you can fall asleep comfortably. The pressure slowly rises while you sleep until it reaches the right level to treat your sleep apnea.

### How do I get a CPAP machine?

Your sleep doctor can prescribe all of your CPAP equipment. This is done through an equipment company contracted with your insurance company.

All insurance companies recognize sleep apnea has a serious health condition. Reimbursement for the CPAP equipment will vary by each insurance company and plan. We suggest you contact your insurance company and inquire about your durable medical equipment benefits.