



ResMed

Making the
most of your
CPAP therapy

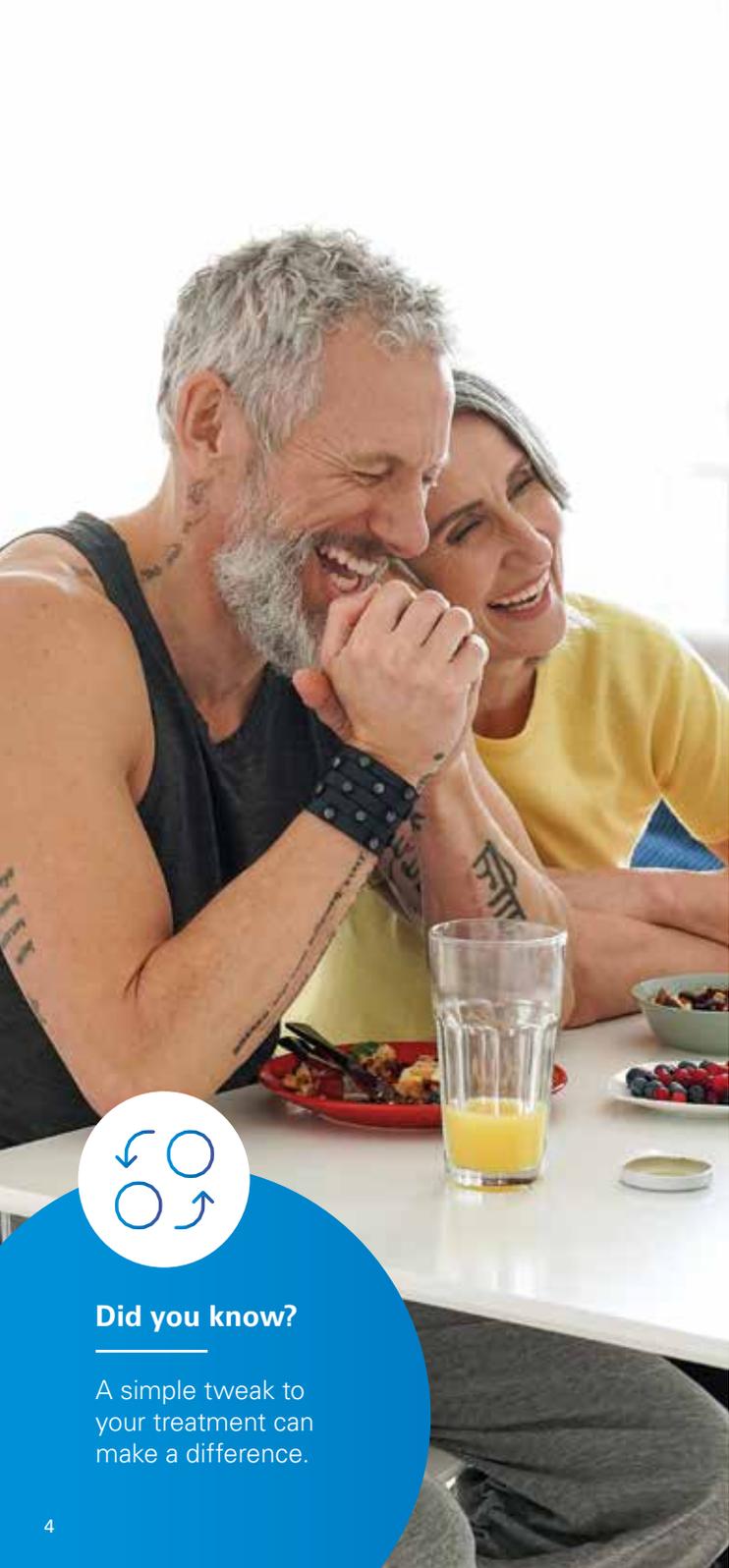


Comfort, maintenance and connected care.



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The hardest part should be behind you

For many sleep apnoea sufferers, the hardest part of therapy comes in those tricky first few days and weeks¹. Getting used to wearing a PAP mask at night and the sensation of pressurised air isn't easy.

This guide is for those of us who've safely negotiated those teething problems and are managing to stick to our treatment at least most of the time. If that's the case for you, the good news is that the hardest part should be behind you. You should also be feeling more energised during the day. A little fresher and livelier thanks to the fact your airway is not repeatedly being blocked during the night.

But perhaps you're only partially satisfied with the results, or maybe you've not noticed a difference at all. It can happen. If you're thinking of quitting your treatment, your first point of call should be your doctor, who can discuss the situation with you.

Often a simple tweak to your treatment can make a difference. Join us as we explore the various ways that therapy for OSA can be made more comfortable and more likely to succeed.

Let's start with a simple question: how are you doing?



Did you know?

A simple tweak to your treatment can make a difference.



Did you know?

The same data you receive on the coaching app is also sent to your healthcare professional, who can track your performance with a qualified eye and intervene if needed.

Tracking your PAP therapy progress

Do you feel better when you wake up in the morning, or less tired during the day since you started your treatment for OSA?

That is perhaps the most obvious of the benefits of effective PAP therapy². Hopefully, you're noticing the positive effects. If you are, keep going! Remember, there is no cure for OSA, only treatment. If you stop using your PAP equipment, the condition and the tiredness will return.

In the past, the only way of knowing if PAP therapy worked was judging by your feelings, your mood and your level of tiredness. Recently, though, technology has been able to quantify your results and put a number on your sleep performance. Now, digital tools and connectivity mean you can monitor your progress day by day and over the long term.

The latest PAP machines monitor your data while you sleep. For example, they can count the number of apnoeas you experience, the quality of the seal on your mask and the length of time you used your PAP machine for overnight. They can give you a daily (or, rather, nightly) score.



What's included in the coaching app?



Therapy at a glance

Every morning, simple stats on your coaching app's dashboard show you how your sleep apnoea therapy went the night before. You can track changes for the previous months and even download your therapy report.



Coaching and reinforcement

You'll receive tailored coaching emails to help you make therapy more comfortable, congratulatory messages when you meet therapy milestones, and regular encouragement to keep up the good work!



Educational tools

The coaching app's sleep library contains how-to instructions, videos and other support materials to help you on your sleep apnoea treatment journey. It offers personalised information based on your sleep apnoea machine and mask type.



How can you make your treatment more comfortable?

If you're thinking about quitting therapy because you find it inconvenient or uncomfortable, please think again: there are lots of ways to make therapy more comfortable and user-friendly.

You should always consult your healthcare professional if you want to change your machine, air pressure settings, mask or any other part of your PAP equipment.

The following points cover some of the most common issues faced by sleep apnoea patients, as well as some potential solutions that you can discuss with your healthcare professional.

If the equipment is too noisy...

Sometimes PAP therapy can generate a little noise, either through the machine itself or through the mask as you breathe air through it. Once again, as the available technology becomes more advanced, this issue can be better addressed.

For the vent, there are also newly developed solutions, including varieties that are proven to keep the sound of air coming through them at 21 decibels. Literally as quiet as a whisper!



Did you know?

Minimalist masks give you a wide field of vision and are a good option if you're self-conscious about your mask or if it makes you feel claustrophobic.

If the CPAP mask feels uncomfortable on your face...

The cushions of many masks are made of silicone and if you have sensitive skin, **you might wake up to find red marks on the bridge of your nose.** Head supports can also leave similar markings on the forehead. They're only temporary but they can be an inconvenience, nonetheless. If this happens, there are solutions. **You can replace the silicone cushions with softer versions made with memory foam,** a breathable material that not only feels lighter against the skin but may be less likely to cause red skin marks.

Alternatively, you can explore the range of different masks. **Some do not cover the forehead or bridge of the nose at all,** as they sit under the nose or fit into your nostrils. These more minimalist masks reduce the area of contact between face and mask, thus avoiding any irritation on the forehead or bridge of the nose and preventing red marks in these areas.

...or your bed partner's face

In some masks, the air coming from the equipment when you breathe out might blow directly into your partner's face or make a noise as it is exhaled. To remedy this, **there are vents** that redistribute the flow of air and there are woven-mesh vents available that reduce noise to below a whisper level.

If the tube keeps coming off in your sleep...

It can happen, especially if you're an active sleeper who turns and wriggles around a lot when you sleep, that the tube carrying the pressurised air from your PAP machine to your mask comes off during the night. Maybe a hand, an arm or a pillow dislodged it. Again, you can find help for this in the variety of masks that exist. Some have the tube connection on the top of the head, while others carry it at the front of the mask. **"Tube up" models, with a tube attached to the top of the head,** allow for freer movement in your sleep and the tube is less likely to become dislodged. Depending on whether you sleep on your front, back or side, there should be a mask that can allow the tube to stay attached for as long as possible during your therapy.

If you have a cold or the therapy gives you a blocked nose

Occasionally, you might find you develop a blocked nose or sinuses during your therapy. **A simple potential fix is using a humidifier.** As standard, a PAP device blows cold air into the nose, mouth (or both) while switched on. A humidifier turns that cold air to warm, which can reduce the chances of a stuffy nose and provide a more pleasant sensation. A humidifier is also useful if you have a cold or a blocked nose.³



Maintaining your PAP equipment

Your PAP equipment is more likely to be effective if it's kept in good condition. It's not high-maintenance material and only requires a little regular effort to maintain its performance. Please refer to your user guide for specific guidance about maintaining your equipment.

In general, we recommend the following cleaning schedule:



**Every day:
mask components
and mask vent**



**Every week:
headgear, tubing and
humidifier tubs**



Did you know?

Uncleaned equipment presents a risk to the performance of your PAP therapy.

Uncleaned equipment presents a risk to the performance of your PAP therapy, as well as a hygiene issue. Oil from the skin can cause a build-up of residue and this can affect your mask fit or cause mask leak, when the pressurised air escapes from the mask and tube. The result is that your air pressure may not be at an effective level, so you won't feel the benefits of CPAP therapy and symptoms, like daytime sleepiness, snoring or headaches, may return. You don't need any specific products to keep your equipment in good condition, **just water and non-perfumed liquid soap**. Also, **CPAP mask wipes can be useful** when on holiday, or simply to cut down on time.



For step-by-step cleaning instructions to help you achieve a fresher therapy experience, read on.

How to clean your mask

- 1 Disassemble your mask (see your user guide for help with this). If you use a nasal pillows mask, remove the pillows from the frame
- 2 Excluding the soft sleeves and headgear, wash all parts of your mask in warm water (30°C or 86°F) with mild washing-up detergent. You should try to remove facial oil from the cushion of your mask, **unless you have a memory foam cushion, which should never be fully submerged in water but rather wiped clean regularly**
- 3 With a soft bristle brush, gently clean the mask vent and any rotating parts which need cleaning, including the swivel, swivel ring or ball joint
- 4 Inspect all parts of your mask carefully. If something doesn't appear clean or you can still see oil build-up, wash again using the method above
- 5 Finally, rinse everything well using drinking-quality water, and allow to dry away from direct sunlight.



How to clean your headgear

- 1 Headgear should be hand washed using mild liquid detergent
- 2 Rinse well, squeeze out any excess water and air-dry away from direct sunlight.

How to clean the air tubing

We recommend that you remove air tubing every day and hang it in a clean, dry place. **Avoid anywhere with direct sunlight as this can cause the tubing to crack.** You should clean your air tubing once per week as follows:

- 1 Remove the tubing from your PAP machine
- 2 Wash in warm water using mild washing detergent
- 3 Rinse well and hang to dry in a clean environment, away from direct sunlight.

How to clean your humidifier

- 1 On a daily basis: Empty the humidifier tub and wipe it thoroughly with a clean disposable cloth. Allow it to dry out of direct sunlight.
- 2 On a weekly basis, you should:
 - Wash it in warm water using a mild dishwashing liquid
 - Rinse thoroughly in water
 - Allow to dry out of direct sunlight or heat

Don't have a lot of time? **The disassembled tub lid, base and plate can be cleaned in a dishwasher** on a *delicate or glassware* cycle (top shelf only). It should not be washed at temperatures higher than 55°C.

If you find white residue on any parts of the device, these can be cleaned with a solution of 1-part household vinegar to 10 parts water.

When to replace your equipment

Each time you clean any of the components from your PAP therapy equipment, it's a good idea to inspect them for wear and tear. How often you replace machines, masks or other products will depend on how often you use or clean them as well as the product in question. The product user guide will give you the information you need in this respect.

Benefits to replacing PAP therapy products include:



An increase in time spent asleep⁴



Better quality sleep and a more positive outlook on life⁵



Staying on track with your therapy⁴

PAP masks are designed to be used night after night but, just like a toothbrush they will need to be replaced. **Common signs that it's time to look for a new mask are:**

- ✘ **Your therapy doesn't seem to be as effective** as it once was; symptoms of your OSA seem to be returning
- ✘ **You find yourself having to tighten the straps on the headgear very frequently** or have them tighter than you usually would
- ✘ **Your mask feels stiff, loose, or less form-fitting** as it was when you first used it
- ✘ **The mask cushion appears cloudy** and is no longer transparent, or is slippery, even after being cleaned and dried. Dirty equipment will also eventually generate an unpleasant odour.
- ✘ **You notice clear signs of wear and tear** such as cracks or breaks in the frame

Mask replacement schedules are unique to every patient and product, but if you've noticed any of the above, get in touch with your healthcare professional to see what might be available to you.

Whatever your reason for replacing your PAP therapy parts, make sure you research the options available to guide you towards the appropriate choice and discuss with care giver who will check among other parameters compatibility with your device.

Other FAQs on PAP therapy

If I stop using my CPAP machine, will my symptoms return?

There is no known cure for OSA, so your CPAP therapy *treats* rather than *cures* your sleep apnoea. That means, if you stop using your CPAP machine during the night, your airway is at risk of collapse and your OSA symptoms, like morning headaches or daytime sleepiness, will most likely return.

If I have a cold, should I stop CPAP therapy?

If you stop using your CPAP machine at night, your OSA symptoms are likely to return. You might be feeling rundown if you have a cold and missing therapy could increase this tiredness.

If you use a nasal mask and your nose is congested, consult your healthcare professional, who may adjust the device settings. **Heated humidifiers can also be useful in reducing congestion.**³ Some CPAP machines come with a built-in humidifier, while others can be purchased separately or offer waterless humidification.

Stuffy or dry noses can also be caused by mask leak due to ill-fitting equipment. You might need to adjust your headgear, clean your equipment or try a different mask.

I find that I feel bloated after using my PAP machine, is this normal?

Sometimes, CPAP therapy users can experience discomfort and bloating which could be due to aerophagia which is a condition which sees air enter the gut (stomach). If you are concerned that you may be suffering from this, you should speak to your healthcare professional about possible treatments.

Can I take my CPAP machine on holiday?

Yes! ResMed machines can operate on various power supplies so are able to be taken overseas. Just don't forget to take the correct adapter for the country you are visiting in order to connect to a power supply. For further information, check the user guide of your machine and scan the qr code below.

Did you know?

You can download our ebook dedicated to travelling with your therapy here:





Other PAP patients share their stories

These testimonials are genuine and documented accounts of the individual's response to treatment.

Outcomes and results may vary, and this individual's response does not provide any indication, warranty or guarantee that other people will have the same or a similar experience. Talk to your healthcare professional for further information.

"The hospital decided to put me onto the new system, which is connected with [ResMed's connected coaching web app] and that's the difference. It will tell you how many hours of sleep you've had, how many times you've taken the mask on or off, how many episodes you've had and how good your mask seal is and you can keep a track on that. It's simple to set up and hey, presto! It's not that confusing.

"Now, I've got the insight of what is actually happening to me on a night. We can't say how much amazing it is, it's just so great. **I now know what to do. I know last night my mask seal wasn't perfect. I've noticed I didn't have such a good sleep, so tonight, I've just got to adjust it. If you've got problems, it suggests tips."**

Andy



“I had severe mixed sleep apnoea, obstructive and central. First, they thought it was the obstructive that was the problem, so I was given a CPAP machine and I was told about [coaching web app] as well. It started to show me that it was getting worse over time.

“The obstructive (sleep apnoea) wasn’t so much the problem. It was more the central apnoea. They said again that **they would monitor me again every single day for three months remotely.**

And actually, I rang them up after two days and I said ‘I don’t know what you are seeing but this is amazing!’

“I went from 80 [apnoeas] an hour down to virtually nothing. Without being on the right therapy I might now wake up, **so to have this [connected coaching web app], that I can see myself on a daily basis on my phone,** how many hours of sleep you are getting a night, how many times on average you are stopping breathing, I can’t thank it enough, it’s brilliant! Like I say, I can go all day! Get up at six in the morning, go all day and still be awake at eleven o’clock at night. I’ve never done that in all my life!”

Paul



“My connected coaching app is giving me the information that I want to know and it’s given to you on a daily basis, so you can adjust it accordingly. You log into it and then if you don’t quite understand something you can go to the video and it tells you exactly there. It’s very clear and succinct. But it gives you the correct information so it’s easy, really. **I’ve taken it abroad and I’ve been able to access [the coaching web app] and carry on using it exactly the same as I do at home.** To be able to have the ability to have access to [the coaching web app] to tell me these are your apnoeas, this is your mask seal, is brilliant because I’m keeping in touch with it.”

Rose



Conclusion

Sleep apnoea can be a real barrier between you and your sleep, your goals and your overall health, but, by using your CPAP machine regularly, you can see effective results.⁶

Give yourself the best chance at achieving what you'd like in life. Whether that's a promotion at work, a healthier lifestyle or quality time for friends and family, start it all with a good night's sleep.



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