



CARING FOR CPAP EQUIPMENT

- It is good to clean your equipment daily.
- This is so that germs will not build up inside.
- It also makes the equipment last longer.
- If you use a humidifier, you should change the water every day.
- Once a week, you should also rinse out the chamber.
- Check that dust does not build up in the filter.

Note: All words that are underlined relate to topics in the Sleep Health Foundation Information Library at www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au

1. What is CPAP equipment?

Many patients with respiratory problems use positive airway pressure therapy. This can be for a problem that affects movement of air into and out of the lungs (e.g. obstructive sleep apnea, obesity or a respiratory muscle disorder) or the lungs themselves (e.g. chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or cystic fibrosis).

Some of this equipment provides continuous positive airway pressure therapy (CPAP) to help keep airways open. Other equipment gives an extra pulse of pressure when you breathe in, as a form of breathing assistance. The type used depends on what is being treated.

Whatever equipment it is there are a few things you need to do to keep it in good condition.

2. Taking care of masks, straps and tubing

Weekly cleaning of masks, straps and tubing is a good idea. This helps hygiene. It will also extend their life. Before you do this, the parts should be separated. You should also disconnect the tubing from the machine and humidifier. Use mild soapy water, rinse and air dry. Hang the tubing over a rail to help this. Avoid using water that is too warm, harsh detergents and direct sunlight when drying. These tend to damage plastic and elastic straps.



For other popular helps visit us online at

www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au

3. Looking after humidifiers

It is common to use humidifiers with these devices. This is to moisten and condition the air you receive. Some people do not need them. But they improve comfort for those that do. If you do use one, then you need to follow a few basic hygiene rules. The water in the humidifier should be changed daily. Empty the chamber in the morning and rinse. Leave the chamber empty during the day. In the evening before using it, refill it with fresh water. De-mineralised or distilled water is best.

This stops minerals from building up on the inner wall of the chamber. These might slowly eat away at the metal parts. As well as this, you should wash the chamber thoroughly. Do this weekly with warm soapy water before rinsing. A monthly soak in diluted (1 in 10) white vinegar can help to get rid of deposits that remain, but these are not harmful.

Remember: clean, rinse and re-fill the water chamber with clean water every day. You need to make sure that water does not stand for a long time.

4. Checking filters

You need to check the machine inlet filter regularly too. Surface dust can be removed with a damp cloth. You can wash some filters. In other cases, the filter should be changed every six months. If it is dusty, then you might need to do this more often.

5. Maintaining the machine

The pumps are robust. Look at the maker's recommendations for how to maintain them. Usually you can use them for years with no problem. Problems become more likely as they get older. Some manufacturers suggest a routine check after using them for 5 years. Of course, if you notice anything unusual (e.g. noisy operation or change), you should tell your supplier straight away.

6. Where can I find out more?

http://sleepdisorders.about.com/od/sleepdisorderstreatment/ht/Cleaning_CPAP.htm

For information on over 60 different sleep related topics, written by professionals, visit the Sleep Health Foundation Information Library at www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au. The underlined topics in this article are covered in detail there.



Sleep Health Foundation

114/30 Campbell Street, Blacktown NSW 2148

T: +61 (0) 2 8814 8655 F: +61 (0) 2 9672 3884



www.facebook.com/SleepHealthFoundation

This information is produced by:

Sleep Health Foundation

ABN 91 138 737 854

www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au

A national organisation devoted to education, advocacy and supporting research into sleep and its disorders.

Disclaimer - Information provided here is general in nature and should not be seen as a substitute for professional medical advice. Ongoing concerns about sleep or other medical conditions should be discussed with your local doctor.

©Sleep Health Foundation, 2013
Version 1: created December 2013