

UTAH SLEEP & PULMONARY SPECIALISTS

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10 TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL FIRST NIGHT WITH CPAP

1. Make sure you understand how to use the “ramp” feature on your machine. This feature allows you to start out at very low pressure that is gradually increased over 5 – 30 minutes depending on your preference. This allows you to fall asleep at a low pressure which is increased to the optimum pressure while you are sleeping. If you are unclear how to use this, review the manual or call the vendor that supplied the machine.
2. When possible try to begin the CPAP on a night when you do not have to work or have an important appointment the next day. This will take some of the anxiety out of feeling you absolutely have to have a sound night’s sleep on this first night.
3. Try to use the mask and device for the first time during the day or early evening while you are awake and out of bed. This way you become familiar with the device before you have to go to sleep for the night.
4. The first step is to test the fit of the mask. Do not attach tubing to the mask and do not connect it to the machine. Put it on and adjust it as needed for comfort. This is just the preliminary adjustment. You may have to fine tune the fit, when you actually get into bed.
5. Next, while sitting up on a comfortable chair or sofa, connect the mask to the machine and turn it on. Be sure to use the ramp feature so the initial pressure you experience is relatively low.
6. Now spend some time sitting quietly and just getting used to the sensation of breathing with the machine. At first it may feel as if it is difficult to exhale, as you continue this sensation should decrease. Reading or watching television may help distract you and take your mind off the activity of breathing. Some masks do not allow you to wear glasses, so you may want to consider use of a radio, stereo, or personal music device.
7. Once you feel somewhat comfortable with breathing with the device it is time to move to the bedroom.
8. Spend some time deciding on where you are going to place the device. Consider which side of the bed you will use and whether or not the machine will sit on a bedside table or the floor. Don’t forget to take into account the location of electrical outlets. If your machine has a separate humidifier you may need 2 outlets. If you also have a lamp or nightlight on that side of the bed you may need to obtain an extension cord with a power strip.
9. When you have decided on the best location for the device; put it in place, get into bed put on the mask, connect it to the machine, and turn it on. Now put yourself into different sleeping positions and notice where the tubing needs to be placed to avoid excess tension, and make sure there are no obstacles to catch on the tubing. Also notice whether or not the mask leaks when you move to and lie in the different position. Small leaks do not decrease the effectiveness of the device, but may be bothersome to you as you sleep. If the leaks are bothersome make small adjustments until it is comfortable.
10. You should now be all set to use the device when it is time to go to bed. Don’t forget to fill the humidifier if you have one. Good luck, and pleasant dreams!