

## **CPAP Frequently Asked Questions & Troubleshooting Guide**

### **Why am I having trouble falling asleep with my CPAP?**

If your pressure feels overwhelming at the beginning of the night, your machine may have a feature called "Ramp," which can be set to start at a lower pressure and gradually increase over a period of time. You can turn this setting on yourself. However, if you would like to change your overall pressure setting, we will need a prescription from your physician to make that change.

### **Why am I still snoring?**

Snoring, choking, and gasping noises should be eliminated during CPAP use. If they are not, your machine pressure may not be adequate. Please contact your physician to see if a pressure change prescription is needed.

### **Air in tummy, painful stomach, bloating, and gas (Aerophagia)**

The medical term for this common CPAP issue is aerophagia. It occurs when air delivered by your CPAP enters the esophagus and stomach rather than the lungs. This can happen if your pressure is set too low or too high. It can also occur if you are a mouth breather but are not wearing a full-face mask. Consult your physician if the problem is chronic or persistent.

### **Sneezing and allergies**

If you are sneezing, you may be experiencing an allergic reaction to the cleaner you are using. Try alternating cleaners. You may also be allergic to mask materials (such as silicone) and may require a mask liner such as RemZzzs. Follow up with your physician regarding options such as a nasal steroid spray or other allergy medications.

### **Machine Problems – Motor Life Expectancy Error**

If this error appears, the machine can often continue functioning for six months to one year. This situation requires a repair/replace prescription from your physician.

### **Machine keeps turning off (Leak Error)**

PAP machines will automatically turn off after a few minutes when there is high leakage. You should: make sure the mask is on before turning the machine on; if using a nasal mask, ensure your mouth is closed (a chin strap may help); make sure the water chamber is snapped shut and fully inserted; ensure your face is clean and free from moisturizers, makeup, creams, or oils; and confirm your mask is adjusted properly.

### **My CPAP machine is not working**

Restart your machine by unplugging it for 30 minutes to one hour, then plug it back in. Ensure the electric plug between the wall and machine is firmly in place. Check that the outlet is working. If the problem persists, schedule an appointment to bring your machine in for evaluation.

### **Machine not transmitting data**

This issue may have been caused by cellular tower upgrades to 5G, affecting older models such as AirSense 10 and DreamStation devices. If this occurs, you can use an SD card to collect data. Insert the SD card into your machine and it will gather up to one year of data. Schedule an appointment with our office to download the data.

### **Why is my machine making a whistling or whirling sound?**

This is usually the result of using an ozone cleaning device on your PAP machine. After extended use, ozone can build up and damage the motor. If this occurs, you will need a repair/replace prescription from your physician. If you have a SoClean unit, we strongly recommend using an adapter to bypass your machine. Advanced Medical Solutions sells this adapter so you can clean supplies without connecting the unit directly to your PAP device.

### **Humidifier Problems – Dry mouth, dry throat, runny or stuffy nose**

A humidifier or temperature adjustment may resolve these issues. Start with the lowest heat setting and increase as needed. Using Biotene oral rinse products may help with dry mouth. Chronic nasal lining dryness may be helped by simple

saline spray solutions available over the counter at your pharmacy. Consult your physician if the problem persists.

### **Water in CPAP tubing**

Excess condensation can form in tubing when the temperature of your bedroom is cooler than the air coming from your machine. Lower the humidity level or switch to heated tubing to resolve the issue.

### **White or pink film in humidifier water chamber**

Bacteria can quickly develop in the water chamber. To prevent this, empty leftover water each morning and allow it to air dry. To remove film buildup, fill the chamber with 1/3 white distilled vinegar and 2/3 water solution. Let soak for one hour, rinse with clean tap water, and air dry completely.

### **Mask Problems – Skin irritation, sores, bruises**

No mask should cause pain or discomfort if sized and fitted correctly. If irritation or sores are developing, you may be over-tightening your mask. Your cushion may also be worn out and need replacing. Mask liners such as RemZzzs may help reduce irritation and leaks.

### **Claustrophobic or don't like wearing the mask**

Patients who experience claustrophobia often require an adjustment period. Practice wearing the mask during the day while sitting in a chair watching television or reading. CPAP use will become routine over time.

### **My eyes are swollen or irritated**

No air should be directed toward the eye area with a properly fitted mask. This may indicate a leak near the top of your mask. Gently tighten the top straps, being careful not to over-tighten. The leak may also indicate a worn cushion that needs replacement. Some people naturally sleep with their eyes partially open, which can cause dryness or irritation. If swelling or irritation is chronic or persistent, consult your physician.

### **Nasal pillow mask soreness**

If your nostrils are sore, you may need to switch to a nasal cushion mask, which gently rests under

your nose rather than being inserted into the nostrils.

### **My mask is making a whistling noise**

Most masks have exhalation ports that allow the escape of carbon dioxide. These tiny holes must be checked during routine cleaning to ensure they are not clogged, as this can cause whistling sounds.

### **Mask fit and adjustment tips**

Mask leaks are one of the most common challenges. For best fit, sit on your bed and place the mask on your head with straps loose. Turn the machine on and lie down in your normal sleeping position. Slowly tighten straps until you achieve a good seal, being careful not to over-tighten. After straps are adjusted, pull the mask slightly away from your face and gently lay it back down to allow cushions to inflate and seal. Mask fit varies by sleeping position. If you sleep on your side, tighten the headgear slightly on that side. Avoid sleeping on your stomach if possible.

### **Mask-specific tips**

Full-face mask users with forehead pads should tighten the upper strap first, then adjust lower straps. Headgear is often 'one-size-fits-most,' but smaller or larger sizes may be available by special order. For nasal pillow masks, position headgear properly and place straps above the ears. Gently insert the pillows into the nostrils and rotate slightly for comfort. The pillows are meant to rest just inside the nostril opening and should not be aggressively inserted. Proper placement should not cause pain.