

Take Care

How to properly maintain your CPAP

Proper care and maintenance of your CPAP equipment is important and will ensure your equipment delivers optimal treatment. For those of you using your CPAP equipment in your truck, you have special considerations with regard to caring and maintaining your equipment.

1. Your CPAP unit should be kept in a dirt and dust free environment. You will need to store your CPAP unit inside the carrying case it came in, or wrap it inside a towel/blanket after your treatment session. This will ensure that your CPAP unit is also protected from cigarette smoke contamination.

2. Make sure your CPAP unit is secured while you are driving to protect it from bouncing and falls. The following is a schedule of cleaning and maintenance recommendations:

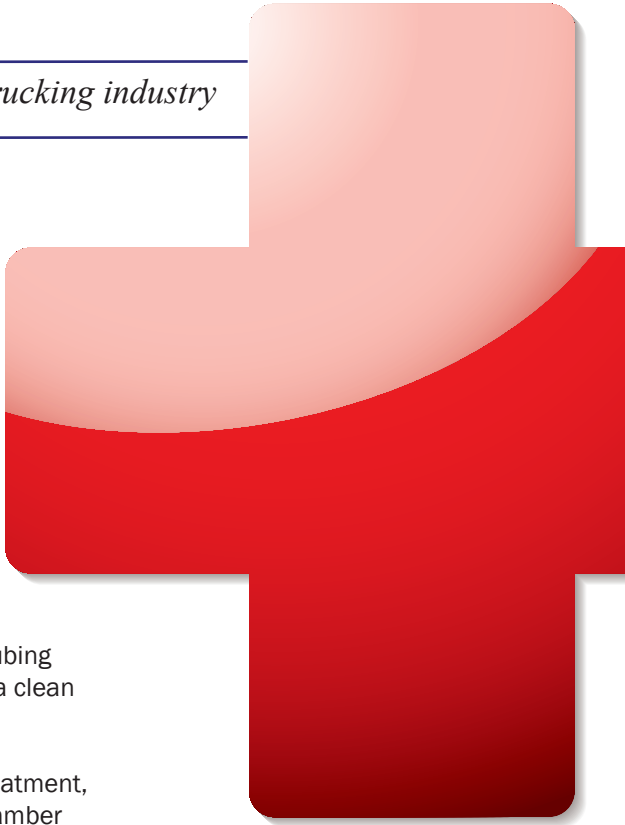
Daily:

1. If possible, disconnect your air tubing from your CPAP unit and hang it in a clean and dry place until next use.
2. If using a humidifier with your treatment, make sure you empty the water chamber of any left over water prior to driving. The CPAP unit is NOT waterproof and if there is water in the water chamber- it is very likely that your CPAP unit will suffer water damage. It is preferable to use distilled water in your humidifier chamber (to reduce the mineral ring build up inside your chamber), but not necessary.

Weekly:

1. Wash the air tube (hose) in warm water using mild detergent (i.e. Ivory Liquid Soap) and rinse thoroughly. Drip dry away from sunlight.

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Keeping up with routine cleaning and maintenance will ensure your CPAP equipment delivers optimal treatment.

PPD: Protecting Professional Drivers is a production of Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics, specializing in premium news and analysis on sleep apnea for the commercial trucking industry, and is published 4 times a year.

Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics
8275 El Rio, Suite 110
Houston, TX 77054
Phone: 713-520-5864
Fax: 713-528-0433
e-mail: info@ppdsleep.com

Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics (PPD), provides professional screening for drivers who are at risk for sleep apnea. This is a HIPPA-compliant, online tool customized to a company's requirements.

Once a driver has been diagnosed with sleep apnea, PPD will provide local diagnostic services with the ease of Web-based scheduling and quick, reliable turn-around – from diagnosis to treatment.

Drivers who require treatment will be fitted for and provided with a CPAP mask, flow generator, and heated humidifier for nightly use.

In order to ensure drivers are using their masks correctly, PPD has partnered with a leading manufacturer of CPAP equipment, masks, and the only provider of a patented wireless compliance monitoring system.

The wireless compliance monitoring system provides daily information of CPAP use, efficacy, and allows real-time troubleshooting of any problems your drivers may be experiencing. With this data, we can enhance your drivers' CPAP acceptance and long-term compliance. In short, our protocols can maximize your results and your return on investment.

Dear Readers,

As you are aware, treatment for sleep apnea improves your health and your safety risk while driving. More and more is learned every year about the diagnosis of sleep apnea, which left untreated, causes cardiac conditions, stroke, hypertension, and is problematic for diabetes and weight control.

You health care professional and your employer want you to use your CPAP machine every time you sleep for as long as you sleep. This keeps your airway open, supplying you with an adequate oxygen supply essential to your good health and alertness.

The Medical Expert Panel, chosen by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, has set a minimum expectation for CPAP compliance. That minimum is more than 4 hours a night, 70% of the time, or 7 out of 10 days. When compliance is turned into your DOT medical examiner, that is the criteria he/she is going to be looking for. Failure to meet the standard could result in a hold on your medical card. If you are following your employer's and medical professional's instructions of using CPAP every time you sleep for as long as you sleep, you should have no problem meeting the minimum. If it is not the case for you, you may be deemed as non-compliant with therapy, which could potentially lead to an out-of-service issue.

PPD will do all it can to support you in your efforts toward compliance. Many of you are doing beautifully on therapy and we enjoy hearing from you. If you are in the early stages of CPAP treatment, keep the faith. It takes more time and practice for some, but we have thousands of drivers doing very well over time. It takes your positive and dedicated mind-set to improve your health and safety, as well as the safety of others.

PPD's dedicated team is here for you. Our goal is improved health, safety and a PASSED DOT MEDICAL EXAM to keep you on the road providing for your families.

Always the Best,

Wendy Sullivan, RN



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Lifting weights may help sleep apnea patients

A new study suggests older, cognitively impaired adults saw an improvement in symptoms of sleep apnea after participating in a strength-training program. According to Gurpreet K. Kalra, PhD, of the Polisher Research Institute in North Wales, Pa., patients who lifted weights regularly for seven weeks had a significant decrease in apnea-hypopnea index (AHI) compared with a control group.

The study involved 97 nursing home or assisted living residents doing three sets of eight exercise repetitions for hip and arm muscles three afternoons each week. Each session was preceded and followed

by 10 minutes of warm up and cool down. Participants also walked with assistance for up to 45 minutes two days each week. Patients' mean age was 82 and more than half were women.

At the end of the study period, those in the exercise group had a drop in AHI from a mean of 18.9 to 16.58, whereas AHI increased among those in the control group from a mean of 18.8 to 20.50.

Kalra suggested a possible mechanism by which strength training might help sleep apnea in these patients is the strengthening of certain muscles, as a common neurologic connection.

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2. Wash your mask and cushion components including the harness in mild detergent. Wipe the mask and cushions dry and air dry the harness.

Monthly:

Clean the exterior of the CPAP unit with a damp cloth and mild detergent.

AIR FILTERS: Your CPAP unit has a disposable air filter in the back, under the blue air filter cover. If driving in dusty conditions, it is probably a good idea to change your air filter every other month or sooner. The air filter is NOT washable or reusable.

To change the air filter:

Remove the air filter cover in the back of your CPAP unit and remove the old air filter. Insert a new filter with the blue tinted side facing out from the device. Make sure to replace the air filter cover.

REPLACEMENT OF YOUR CPAP EQUIPMENT:

The wear and tear on CPAP equipment is different for each individual, but most people need to replace their equipment as follows:

Every 6 Months: Mask, Hose and Water chamber

Every 2 Months or sooner: Cushions for your mask and air filters.

*(Cushions (like a toothbrush) need to be replaced often because they wear out from usage. It may not be visually obvious to you, but a worn out cushion could affect your treatment by increasing leaks around the mask).

Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics will automatically place you on a bi-yearly equipment replacement schedule. If you feel you need more or less equipment replacement items, please call us at 1-866-370-3102 and we will be happy to accommodate your special needs. We understand that following the above recommendations may be difficult for many of you, especially those who are away from home for long periods of time. If you can incorporate as many of these steps as possible, especially making sure your air filter is clean and your humidifier chamber is dry when driving, you will greatly increase the lifespan of your CPAP unit.

Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics is committed to servicing drivers' Sleep Apnea needs and we believe that one key to successful CPAP treatment is properly cared for and maintained CPAP equipment.

28 percent of drivers fall asleep behind wheel

Almost half of all Americans admit to a poor night's sleep each night, according to a recent poll by the National Sleep Foundation. In addition, more than half (54 percent) say they have driven while drowsy and 28 percent admit to falling asleep behind the wheel.

David Cloud, CEO of the National Sleep Foundation said, although people can judge when they are too tired, they don't realize driving drowsy is a serious danger. It is possible to fall into a 3-4 second microsleep without realizing it and, if traveling at 65 mph, can drive the length of a football field basically unconscious.

Sleepiness can cause slower reaction times, vision impairment and lapses in judgment, even if you do manage to stay awake.

Cloud added, getting enough sleep could save your life.

How can you prevent fall-asleep crashes?

Get a good night's sleep before you drive, at least 7-9 hours the night before.

Don't be too rushed. While drivers drive at night or without stopping to maximize their holiday weekends, it's better to drive alert.

Always drive long distances with a buddy who can remain awake when you drive or to take turns with behind the wheel.

Take a break every 100 miles or 2 hours. Do something to refresh

yourself like eat or run. Nap for 15-20 minutes if you feel drowsy.

Stay away from alcohol and medications that could make you sleepy.

Don't drive at times when you would normally be snoozing.

Drink caffeine. Two cups of coffee could increase your alertness for several hours.

Source: National Sleep Foundation

[For more information about driving drowsy, visit drowsydriving.org]

Study: Americans suffer from excessive sleepiness



About 19.5 percent of American adults suffer from moderate to severe excessive daytime sleepiness, according to a new study.

Dr. Maurice Ohayon, professor of psychiatry at Stanford University and director of the Stanford Sleep Epidemiology Research Center in Palo Alto, Calif., said the number of individuals sleepy or drowsy during situations where they should be alert is disturbing.

The prevalence of excessive sleepiness is much higher than European populations, Ohayon said, citing a 2002 study, which

reported 15 percent of Europe's population suffering from excessive daytime sleepiness.

The study revealed 11 percent of participants reported severe excessive daytime sleepiness – a condition more prevalent in women (13 percent) than in men (8.6 percent).

Self-imposed sleep deprivation is tagged as one of the primary causes of excessive sleepiness among Americans. As people feel pressure to skimp on sleep in order to get more done. However, Ohayon pointed out it is always a mistake to curtail your sleep.

