

# Overcome your CPAP anxiety

By Katia LaManna, LCSW

Let's face it, CPAP treatment is difficult. There is nothing natural about sleeping with a cumbersome mask/hose and inhaling/exhaling against air pressure during the night. For most people, the whole idea of CPAP treatment can seem overwhelming, quickly leading them to become discouraged and give up on treatment.

Truck drivers, specifically, face many challenges when it comes to using and adhering to CPAP treatment while on the road. You must deal with tight sleeping quarters, power supply issues as well as unfavorable weather conditions – all of which can make the whole CPAP experience difficult.

Therefore, it is not all that uncommon for many truck drivers to feel anxious when starting CPAP treatment.

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The following suggestions are helpful in managing your initial anxiety to CPAP treatment:

- Request to have a dedicated clinician assigned to your case
- Develop an open and close relationship with your clinician (this can be done over the phone as well)
- Initially you may need 2-4 outreach calls per week from your clinician
- Ensure that you have received adequate information and education not only about your CPAP unit and treatment, but also with regard to your diagnosis
- Patience, patience, patience.....

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.

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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,

Sleep hygiene is important for all of us, not just those with sleep disorders. More and more we are learning how important sleep is to our overall health and well being. Here are some tips for how you can improve your sleep hygiene:

1. Don't go to bed unless you are sleepy. If you are not sleepy at bedtime, then do something else. Read a book, listen to soft music or browse through a magazine. Find something relaxing, but not stimulating, to take your mind off of worries about sleep. This will relax your body and distract your mind.
2. If you are not asleep after 20 minutes, then get out of the bed. Find something else to do that will make you feel relaxed. If you can, do this in another room. Your bedroom should be where you go to sleep. It is not a place to go when you are bored. Once you feel sleepy again, go back to bed.
3. Begin rituals that help you relax each night before bed. This can include such things as a warm bath, light snack or a few minutes of reading.
4. Get up at the same time every morning. Do this even on weekends and holidays.
5. Get a full night's sleep on a regular basis. Get enough sleep so that you feel well-rested nearly every day.
6. Keep a regular schedule. Regular times for meals, medications, chores, and other activities help keep the inner body clock running smoothly.
7. Don't read, write, eat, watch TV, talk on the phone, or play cards in bed.
8. Do not have any caffeine after lunch.
9. Do not have a beer, a glass of wine, or any other alcohol within six hours of your bedtime.
10. Do not have a cigarette or any other source of nicotine before bedtime.
11. Do not go to bed hungry, but don't eat a big meal near bedtime either.
12. Avoid any tough exercise within six hours of your bedtime. You should exercise on a regular basis, but do it earlier in the day. (Talk to your doctor before you begin an exercise program.)
13. Try to get rid of or deal with things that make you worry. If you are unable to do this, then find a time during the day to get all of your worries out of your system.
14. Make your bedroom quiet, dark, and a little bit cool. An easy way to remember this: it should remind you of a cave.

Sleep hygiene helps you stay healthy by keeping your mind and body rested and strong.

To your Health and Rest,

*Dr. Mark Berger*

President  
Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics LLC



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## Study: Sleep disorders catalyst for unemployment, low incomes

Sleep disorders could be causing more than your health to suffer. A recent Danish study revealed people who violently snore and/or suffer from obstructive sleep apnea claim higher socioeconomic costs. The University of Copenhagen and the Danish Institute for Health Services Research conducted the study.

Snoring, sleep apnea, and obesity-related respiratory difficulties are pretty common disorders, which affect a large piece of the population and seriously affect quality of life, according to Poul Jennum, professor of Clinical Neurophysiology at the Center for Healthy Aging at the University of Copenhagen Faculty of Health Sciences, and the head of the Danish Centre for Sleep Medicine, Glostrup Hospital.

The study revealed unemployment among sleep disorder patients was 30 percent higher than the study's control population.

In addition, patients who suffered from obesity-related sleep problems claimed the lowest rate of employment. When these patients were employed, they earned about 30 percent less than their healthy control subjects. Patients with sleep disorders were also more likely to be on welfare and be on medication subsidized by the government.

The study also revealed sleep apnea patients, or those with obesity-related respiratory problems, were tagged with prescription and hospital costs two to three times higher than healthy control subjects.

Researchers concluded the socioeconomic consequences of sleep disorders were present up to eight years before patient diagnosis.

The study was published in *Thorax: An International Journal of Respiratory Medicine* and reflects economic issues outside the United States.

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Anxiety to CPAP must be addressed quickly in order to ensure future treatment adherence and success (particularly in the first two weeks of treatment).

Anxious drivers very often take a longer time becoming acquainted with CPAP treatment and may experience more problems such as Claustrophobia and mask and pressure sensitivities.

Techniques that might work in helping you overcome your anxiety include the following:

- Be patient with yourself and your treatment expectations
- Breakdown treatment expectations into smaller achievable goals
- With the guidance of your clinician, work on a few desensitization techniques
- Are you Claustrophobic?
- Consider a lightweight or hybrid mask
- With the supervision of a clinician- adjust CPAP to lower pressures (initially- if helpful)
- Patience, patience, patience.....

Everybody is different in their adjustment to CPAP treatment. There is no cookie-cutter mold approach. What works for one person may be an absolute failure in another. It's important to remain open and patient to treatment suggestions and in time you are more likely to conquer your anxiety associated to CPAP treatment.

*What are some of your success stories overcoming your anxiety to CPAP treatment? Email your answers to [katia@ppdsleep.com](mailto:katia@ppdsleep.com).*





## Study: Reflux, obesity, OSA recipe for trouble

Acid reflux, obesity and sleep apnea could have a potentially life-threatening correlation, according to results of a recent study by the Lynn Health Science Research Institute in Oklahoma City, Okla. Researchers worked to determine if the three common ailments may affect each other and whether or not an individual is more likely to die because of these physical health issues.

According to the study, the effects of breathing pauses in a sleep apnea patient may be magnified if the person has acid reflux. Reflux or GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease) is a gastrointestinal problem in which stomach acid backs up into the unlined esophagus behind the breastbone. Acid reflux can also produce shortness of breath.

The study concluded obesity is a direct cause of both health conditions. Fat deposits tend to clog throat tissues making it difficult to breathe. In addition, body fat compressing the stomach as well as hernias push stomach acid up the esophagus faster, making way for uncomfortable reflux.

The research institute did a similar study

in 2003, which revealed 25 percent of the 81 participants who claimed sleep issues but no obvious heartburn symptoms did in fact have nighttime acid reflux without knowing it. In addition, when acid reflux was present, researchers found it was directly related to sleep disturbance in almost 100 percent of the cases.

Dr. William Orr, a researcher in the 2003 study said "silent reflux" may be the cause of sleep disturbances in patients with unexplained sleep disorders.

Current researchers at the Lynn Health Science Research Institute explain that these ailments may be linked to other significant health dangers as well, like depression or carelessness.

### Improve your digestion

- Try a lactose-free diet
- Eat 3 to 6 small meals a day
- Skip the liquids with meals
- Loosen your belt/unbutton pants
- Relax after meals but don't lie down
- Do not exercise after meals
- Eat slowly

### Foods that can cause acid reflux:

#### Veggies

Tomatoes, onions, broccoli, cabbage, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, turnips, cucumber, kale, corn, garlic, beans

#### Carbs

oatmeal, tofu, pastries

#### Drinks

coffee, milk, tea, citrus juices, alcohol, caffeine, carbonated drinks, tomato juice

#### Condiments

chili powder, honey, spearmint, peppermint, hot spices, black pepper, ketchup, vinegars, cream

#### Fruits

apples with peels, bananas, oranges, lemon, grapefruit, lime, pineapple, figs, coconut, strawberries, rhubarb

Source: [www.reflux.org](http://www.reflux.org)



## 1 in 3 not getting their beauty sleep

One in three individuals aren't getting their recommended zzzz's, according to two large health surveys. The CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion and Office of Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Science determined one-third of respondents (35.3 percent and 37.1 percent) were getting less than seven hours of sleep per night. These same individuals had problems functioning on a daily basis, including problems with concentration and memory.

Nearly half of the respondents (48 percent) also reported snoring. Another 37.9 percent said in the preceding month they had unintentionally fallen asleep during the day, and 4.7 percent said they'd fallen asleep while driving.

Researchers urged troubled sleepers to keep a regular sleep schedule, and avoid stimulating activities as well as caffeine, nicotine and alcohol in the evening.

# Travelers' tips for flying with your CPAP machine

By Ken Walker  
AllBusiness.com



A CPAP machine is a godsend for people who have a sleeping disorder. The only trouble is it doesn't travel well. So, how do you care for such a thing when you know TSA security will want to have a look at it?

Here's what I've learned over the past few years:

Try to wean yourself off of the water tank. Traveling without the tank, the distilled water, etc., gives you so much more room and so much less hassle.

If you need the tank, be 100 percent certain the water tank in your unit is completely dry before you pack it. It only takes a single drop of water to wreak a lot of expensive damage in the main unit. Packing and carrying the unit around will distribute any droplets of leftover water, and you certainly don't want that to happen, so dry it out very well!

If you travel with the unit as a carry-on, be sure to take it out and have it ready for security. They should be trained on what a CPAP machine is and how to examine it. When you give it to them, explain, "Sir, this is a CPAP machine and it is very expensive. I understand you need to check it out but would you please be careful with it?"

Ultimately, I found carrying the CPAP machine with me through the airport was more dangerous to the machine than



Get through airport security with ease

checking it in a bag. Casual bumps, stairs or escalators put stress onto the machine it wasn't designed for.

When you pack your CPAP in a checked bag, wrap it in a T-shirt, then secure it on all six sides with sock bundles, shirts, and other soft items. Make sure the packed items are fairly "tight" when you close your suitcase so they don't slide back and forth.

Pack an extra "2-port" outlet so you can actually plug in the hotel's alarm clock, lamp, as well as your CPAP machine.

*Ken Walker is a traveling technical trainer in California who makes his home in Minneapolis, MN.*

### Did You Know...

*According to cross-sectional studies published in the New England Journal of Medicine, sleep apnea occurs in one in four men and one in 10 women.*