

How to Choose the Best CPAP Machine

If you have recently been diagnosed with sleep apnea, then your next step will involve purchasing the best CPAP machine, mask and accessories. CPAP therapy is the most commonly prescribed treatment for sleep apnea. Using this machine will take some getting used. In the beginning, wearing a CPAP mask can cause you to feel somewhat claustrophobic and the prescribed level of air pressure can feel uncomfortable when exhaling. Not to mention the loud noise emitted by the machine, which can make it harder for you to fall asleep. There are also other aspects of the device that can take some getting used to and symptoms that can arise due to a poorly fitting mask or lack of humidity. In order to find the best CPAP machine for you, you'll need to do a little research and find out about the different models of masks, CPAP settings and extra features available.

What to look for in the Best CPAP Machine Devices

It's common for a person new to CPAP therapy to not consistently use their machine. Often, patients will cease using the device altogether because it's uncomfortable, they are unable to adjust to breathing with the device or they frequently wake up in the morning with a sore throat and/or cough, due to lack of humidity. A poor fitting mask can also be to blame and can have a big impact on how effective your treatment is. Consistent use of your CPAP machine is very important. If you are simply unable to adjust to sleeping with your device, speak with your physician. A sleep specialist can help to troubleshoot any issues you may have and can make recommendations on where to find the best CPAP machine, comfortable models of CPAP masks, or they may need to make changes to your air pressure settings.



The best CPAP machine will be very efficient and will deliver a constant pressure of air. It's recommended that you purchase your device from a local, reputable vendor. If you decide to purchase a cheaper model online, keep in mind that you could run into a number of problems that will make your treatment less effective.

If you have decided to buy from a local vendor, your sleep specialist can guide you on the best CPAP machine to buy, based on affordability and quality.

Extra Features that can Improve CPAP Therapy

When it comes to CPAP therapy, the mask you wear is just as important as the machine you use. In order for your treatment to be effective, you'll need to wear a mask that provides a tight seal around the mouth and nose. Before you decide to purchase one, make sure you try on a number of styles. A poor fitting mask is one of the main reasons people cease using their CPAP machine.

Another must-have feature for the CPAP machine is a humidifier. Many people who use a CPAP machine will experience sore throats, cough or dry nasal passages. A machine with a built-in humidifier will work to get rid of these symptoms by providing much needed humidity as you breathe. The main issue with a CPAP machine with a built-in humidifier is the maintenance. You'll need to clean your machine every day in order to prevent mold from growing. CPAP machines with humidifiers are also much more expensive than the standard models and may not be covered by insurance.

The ramp feature on CPAP machines will allow you to breathe easier. One of the biggest issues for a lot of users involves the inability to comfortably exhale against the set level of air pressure. Some models of CPAP machines include the ramp feature. This feature is designed to help you exhale easier but emitting a lower level of air pressure until you fall asleep. Based on how you set the ramp, the air pressure will gradually increase to the prescribed level, so you won't have trouble drifting off to sleep.

More expensive models offer recorded data capabilities. This feature will record any issues you have with your breathing pattern while you're sleeping. This feature is a great tool to have because it provides the information your sleep specialist needs in order to determine how effective your treatment is.



If you travel on a regular basis, then you should keep in mind that you'll need a model that's portable. A portable CPAP machine is small enough to fit in your carry-on luggage and is designed with travel in mind.

Will my Health Insurance pay for a CPAP Machine?

Lastly, shop around for CPAP machines made by the top manufacturers. Some of the more popular brands include ResMed, Respirationics and Devilbiss.

Most insurance companies will cover the cost of standard CPAP machines, but they may not pick up the bill for machines that include extra features like the humidifier or data recording.

Different Styles of the Sleep Apnea Pillow

If you suffer from sleep apnea, your physician will recommend a number of different treatment options. The most commonly prescribed treatment is CPAP or BIPAP therapy. A sleep apnea pillow is often used with this type of therapy and is designed to make treatment more effective and comfortable.

Sleep Apnea Pillow Basics and Designs

A sleep apnea pillow can be used alone or with CPAP or BIPAP therapy. These pillows will work to position your neck in a manner that allows your airways to remain open. Some models are specifically designed to be used with a CPAP machine and feature cut-outs that will accommodate the mask's tubing. They also work to reduce the pressure caused by the mask, making CPAP therapy a more comfortable treatment. Masks can irritate the skin, causing you to wake up frequently during the night.



The wedge sleep apnea pillow is designed to keep the airways open. Most people with sleep apnea who prefer lying on their backs experience a number of sleep interruptions during the night, when compared to patients who sleep on their side. The wedge sleep apnea pillow works by preventing narrowing of the throat and can help people to maintain a side sleeping position during the night. The size of the pillow is very important because the wrong size may not be effective for treatment. The pillow should be two feet wide. The amount of elevation the pillow can provide is also important. Most styles range from five to twelve inches. An elevation of five to eight inches is usually recommended.

Most sleep specialists can agree that using a sleep apnea pillow can be an effective way to manage apnea, even without the use of a CPAP or BIPAP machine. People who sleep with the wedge pillow will experience fewer apnea episodes, fewer headaches during the day and will have more energy.

If you're interested in adding a special type of pillow to your nightly apnea treatment, speak with your physician first in order to determine what type and style will be the most effective for you. They can also recommend a reputable manufacturer and can write a prescription for the pillow in order to have your health insurance cover the cost.

Sleep Apnea Nasal Pillows for Apnea Mask Alternatives

Nasal pillows for sleep apnea are used as a less invasive alternative to the traditional style of sleep apnea mask. Instead of wearing a mask on your face the pillow and hose is connect to an adapter, which is hooked up to the tubing of your machine. Using nasal pillows means that you won't have to worry about an allergic reaction to the basic masks or skin irritation. This type of mask is also a good solution for patients who have issues with claustrophobia, or for patients with facial hair.

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How CPAP Settings are Determined

While in the past it was possible to purchase a CPAP machine online or from a medical supply store without a prescription, these days a prescription is required. Your physician will also need to prescribe the CPAP settings. Using the wrong CPAP settings can have a big impact on how effective treatment is and it can also cause you to stop using the machine if your physician has prescribed a level that's too high for you.

Making Adjustments to CPAP Settings

The typical prescribed CPAP settings will range from six to fifteen CM/H20. Some users may require a higher setting. The level of air pressure is designed to keep your airways open, in order to avoid an apnea episode. The pressure is described as less than a sneeze and it's rarely strong enough to cause the user's ears to pop.

In order to prescribe the right type of CPAP settings you will need to participate in a sleep study. During a sleep study you will spend the night at a sleep clinic, where you will be hooked up to machines that monitor your breathing. While you're sleeping, technicians will slowly increase air pressure until they have reached the correct amount that allows your airways to remain open, comfortably.

After the sleep study, make sure you find out the pressure your physician has prescribed. Some patients will find that the prescribed pressure has effectively prevented episodes with sleep apnea, while others may still feel tired and experience headaches, months after treatment. If you are still experiencing these symptoms then your physician may need to adjust the CPAP settings. They will also walk you through your equipment use in order to troubleshoot problems involving the CPAP mask.



If the pressure has been set too low, it won't eliminate the apnea episodes. Signs that the pressure is too low includes snoring, feeling deprived of air and insomnia. You may also experience subtle feelings of claustrophobia.

If the settings are too high then your apnea mask may leak or you will have a sore throat and dry mouth or feel bloated the next morning, due to swallowing air.

What do I do if CPAP Therapy is no Longer Working?

If you begin to feel like your CPAP therapy isn't as effective as it once was, this is fairly common and is a simple fix. If you have noticed changes in your sleep, irritability and fatigue in the morning or complaints from your partner that you have begun to snore, make an appointment with your sleep specialist. They will initially try increasing the level of air pressure, but if you still experience issues with sleep you may need to undergo an additional sleep study. Often making adjustments to the level of air pressure, replacing or purchasing a different style of apnea mask or adding an apnea chin strap are enough to correct any issues with your CPAP therapy. If you have just started using a CPAP machine, your physician may request that you continue using it for another week or two before making any changes. This is because CPAP machines can be initially uncomfortable, but still provide effective treatment once the patient has become adjusted to using it consistently.

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How the CPAP Chin strap can help you Sleep Better at Night

A CPAP chin strap is a very effective tool for apnea sufferers who use CPAP therapy and tend to sleep with their mouths open. The strap works to keep the mouth shut during sleep, which can significantly increase the effectiveness of apnea treatment. It also helps to prevent dry throat and nasal symptoms in the morning.

Why you need a CPAP Chin Strap

Breathing through the nose is the recommended way to sleep, however, many people with apnea are mouth br



eatheers because of issues with jaw structure or nasal congestion. If you suffer from a nasal obstruction, such as a deviated septum, you should speak with your sleep specialist.

Mouth breathing has been proven to have an adverse effect on CPAP therapy because the air administered by the machine cannot get through the airways with the right amount of pressure.

Dry mouth and a sore throat are other side effects that can result from sleeping with your mouth open. If your partner has reported that you do in fact sleep with your mouth open, you can try to learn how to sleep with your mouth shut, but it's a lot harder than you'd think. Another option is to use a full face CPAP mask, which makes it almost impossible for your mouth to fall open during sleep. Many people choose not to use this option because the full face masks are uncomfortable and invasive. Others simply cannot afford the high price for this style of mask.

Lastly, you can try the CPAP chin strap. The chin strap will wrap around the head and sit snugly under the jaw. These devices are usually pretty affordable. If your physician writes you a prescription for a chin strap your health insurance will cover the cost. All models of chin straps are adjustable and able to accommodate heavier patients.

It can take some time getting used to sleeping with your mouth closed. You can also have difficulty sleeping with the chin strap because they're designed to be worn with a tight fit and this can be hard to adjust to. You should not order a chin strap online, because you will need to try on different styles and brands. A medical supply store will carry a variety of chin straps. The staff can help you put one on and adjust it. They can also point out the more popular brands or the type of straps that are covered by your insurance.

What if the Apnea Chin Strap Doesn't Work?

If you have tried using this device without success then your next step will be the full face apnea mask. As mentioned before, these masks are pretty expensive and many users will stop CPAP treatment because they tend to be uncomfortable. However, they're definitely worth a shot if you're still experiencing sleepless nights or increased fatigue during the day.

Oral Appliance for Sleep Apnea: How to Choose a Model

The oral appliance for sleep apnea is a small acrylic device that will fit over both the lower and upper teeth, similar to a mouth guard, or it will fit snugly over the tip of the tongue. The mouth guard style of the sleep apnea oral appliance will work by moving the lower jaw forward, in order to keep the airways open. The smaller, tip of the tongue device will work to pull the tongue forward and prevent it from falling into the back of your mouth during sleep and blocking your airways.

Oral Appliance for Sleep Apnea Benefits

Using an oral appliance for sleep apnea will help to reduce snoring and improve your breathing during sleep. You can purchase these devices at a medical supply store or pharmacy, but these over the counter models may not be as effective or as comfortable as the devices that you have custom made by your sleep specialist or dentist.

Prescribed mouth guard models are custom made for each person. They are made out of heat sensitive acrylic and designed to promote easier breathing by preventing soft tissues from blocking your airways. These models are custom made because the appropriate jaw position needed in order to achieve success will vary from patient to patient.



The tongue devices are custom made and use a soft material that fits snugly around the tongue in order to bring it forward, using suction. This type of oral appliance is recommended for patients with dentures or patients who found the mouth guard style too uncomfortable. This is the least invasive style of oral appliance and features a high success rate in patients with mild or moderate sleep apnea.

Are there any Side effects from Oral Appliance Apnea Treatment use?

According to studies, research showed an average of ten percent of patients experienced joint or jaw pain after using an oral appliance for sleep apnea. Many patients who initially experienced this type of discomfort reported that it disappeared after two weeks of use. However, the pain can make a reappearance if you stop using the device for more than a month. Thirty percent of patients reported a change in their bite. If changes in your bite occur, speak with your doctor or dentist in order to determine if dental treatment or a change in the size and type of oral appliance is necessary.

If you have decided to use an oral appliance to treat your sleep apnea, you will need to make an appointment with a sleep specialist or dentist, in order to have a custom fit model made. A mold of your teeth will be taken and sent to a lab where the permanent oral appliance will be created. Typically, it can take two to four weeks before they're ready.

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The Difference between CPAP and BIPAP Machines

If you suffer from sleep apnea and have been recently diagnosed with a moderate or severe case, then your physician will likely recommend one of two possible treatment options: BIPAP or CPAP therapy. Because of this you may be curious to know more about the difference between CPAP and BIPAP machines. Both types are prescribed to provide a steady stream of air, which works to keep your airways open while you sleep. While there are some significant differences between CPAP and BIPAP machines, both types are very effective options for sleep apnea treatment.

The Difference between CPAP and BIPAP Devices

The main difference between CPAP and BIPAP machines is the air pressure options. Most physicians will recommend trying CPAP therapy first, because it's a more affordable treatment option, the machine is quieter than a BIPAP machine and it's very effective. All health insurance companies will cover the cost for this type of apnea device. BIPAP therapy is usually recommended when patients stop using their CPAP machines because they're uncomfortable. The CPAP machine works by delivering a constant level of air pressure. This means it can be uncomfortable to exhale against the air pressure and can cause users to wake up. This type of treatment is hard for many people to get used to, and instead of speaking with their sleep specialist they will simply stop treatment.



BIPAP machines are very similar to CPAP machines, but they differ in important ways. While CPAP machines only offer one constant level of air pressure, the BIPAP machine offers two. The machine can be set to administer a lower amount of air pressure when the person exhales, making it easier to breathe and preventing the user from waking up. Because of this, more patients will successfully continue treatment, when compared to patients who use CPAP therapy. Not all insurance companies will cover the cost of a BIPAP machine, and these machines are very expensive. Many people will turn to the option of renting a BIPAP machine on a monthly basis. Patients who have

tried both types of therapies have also reported that BIPAP machines are much louder than CPAP devices, which can make it harder to fall asleep.

Both of these machines can include features such as sleep data recording and built-in humidifiers, which will increase the price. There are a variety of styles and sizes of masks that can work with each type of machine and the style you choose will be based on which type provides the best fit and the most comfort.

Can I stop Using my CPAP Machine and go out and buy a BIPAP Device?

If you're currently using CPAP therapy it's very important that you speak with your doctor before stopping treatment, especially if you suffer from a severe case of sleep apnea. Your physician can work with you to find a solution to the issues you're experiencing with your device and they can also recommend a medical supply store that offers rentals for both types of machines. In order to purchase or rent a CPAP or BIPAP machine you will need to provide a written prescription from your doctor.

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Travel CPAP Therapy Devices

Travel CPAP machines are portable and small and designed for easy travel. Some newer models of travel CPAP devices feature humidification and standalone or integrated power options. For apnea sufferers, purchasing this type of device for long flights or for use while on vacation is a wonderful solution to the worries they have experienced in the past when using a standard sized CPAP machine while away from home.

Travel CPAP: How to Prepare

When it comes to power options for the travel CPAP models most are designed to operate on both DC and AC battery currents. So this type of flexibility can come in handy if you plan on traveling overseas.

Just because they're small and portable doesn't mean that they can only be used on vacation. These machines are actually powerful enough to be used safely on a daily basis.

If you're considering purchasing this type of apnea device, talk with your physician or insurance provider. Not all insurance companies will cover the cost of a portable CPAP machine but some might, or at the very least they'll cover part of the cost.



If you've made plans to get away, your CPAP machine and equipment should go with you. In order to prepare for travel there are a few things to keep in mind, to ensure that you enjoy a trouble free vacation while still receiving effective apnea treatment.

If you have used your portable CPAP machine before, double check that all the water has been removed from the humidifier. If water is left in the chamber it can get into the machine and cause some serious damage.

When you're going through airport security you need to stay with your machine. Just like when taking a laptop through security, you need to keep a close eye on how your device is handled by airport staff. In order to move through security faster, be sure to identify your CPAP machine as medical equipment. You can do this by applying a medical equipment luggage tag to your CPAP travel bag.

Before you head off to the airport you also need to be prepared for the power needs of your CPAP device. If you plan on using a battery, make sure that you have all the parts that are required to run your device using battery power. If you're traveling overseas, make sure you pack an international adapter plug.

Can I Use my CPAP Machine During a Flight?

If you're going to be away from home, it's important that you travel prepared. Make sure you pack your power cord and also bring along a back-up mask and extra tubing. It's also a good idea to speak with someone from the airline regarding size restrictions and carry-on restrictions. Some airlines do not allow the use of CPAP machines or allow you to bring all of the necessary equipment on a flight. If this is the case, shop around for an airline that will allow you to safely travel with your equipment. You may be required to bring a note from your physician proving that it's medically necessary that you use your CPAP machine while in the air.

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Why a Resmed CPAP Machine for Apnea Treatment is so popular

The Resmed CPAP machine features a sleek, lightweight design, which makes it easier for travel. This model also offers a universal power supply design, which means they're great for traveling overseas. Most models of CPAP machines are large and bulky, making them not air travel friendly. Because of the size of a Resmed model, you can relax knowing that you'll be able to fly without missing a treatment.

Resmed CPAP Machine: A Look Inside

In order to purchase a Resmed CPAP machine you'll need a written prescription for your physician. CPAP machines by Resmed are pretty popular, due to their portability and lightweight design. Consumers that purchased a Resmed CPAP machine reported that it was also significantly quieter than other brands of CPAP or BIPAP machines. Because these devices feature climate control, they can automatically adapt to different types of environmental conditions while working hard to deliver the right amount of humidity. This feature will help to prevent dry nasal passages and sore throats from occurring. These machines also feature user friendly controls, with an interface that's easy to navigate and a color LCD display screen. The machine's menu can make it easy for you to set or change your air pressure level and humidity settings.



Resmed devices also feature an SD card, which means that it will record important breathing pattern information while you sleep. If you're having issues sleeping through the night you can simply bring the SD card with you to your doctor's appointment and your physician can effectively determine the cause of your sleep interruptions and change the pressure settings on your machine.

Not only are these machines nice to look at, but they also feature impressive technology. The sound of the air being administered can be described as smooth and minimal, thanks to the machine's easy-breathe motor. The built-in humidifier is not found on older Resmed models and it's a welcome improvement. If you own a model with a humidifier, it's important that you clean the water tank at least once a day in order to prevent mold growth. If you plan on taking the machine out of the house for a weekend getaway or vacation, it's also important that you empty out the humidifier and ensure that the tank is dry. Otherwise, water left in the tank can get into the machine and cause significant damage. Water damage is not covered by the manufacturer's warranty and you may have a hard time getting your insurance to cover an additional apnea machine.

Traveling with Your Resmed CPAP Device

Before you can travel with your Resmed CPAP machine you'll need to speak with the airline in order to get clearance to use your device during a flight. Because of this, it can come in handy if you have your doctor write a note explaining that using your CPAP machine during air travel is medically necessary and keep this note with you whenever you travel. You should also request a seat that's near a power source. The Resmed CPAP machine is able to automatically adjust for changes in altitude and can run on any type of power supply in the world, as long as you purchase a special adapter.

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