



Valley Respiratory Services S.T.A.R.S. Healthcare

"Where patients are our priority."

Tips for Better Sleep Hygiene

- Go to bed & wake up at the same times throughout the week, including weekends
- Use your bedroom for sleep, sex and times off illness only; do not watch TV or eat in bed
- Avoid napping during the day
- Exercise regularly, but not within 3 to 4 hours of bedtime
- Keep a regular schedule with meals, medications, chores and other activities
- Avoid large meals, caffeine, nicotine and alcohol close to bedtime
- Manage stress by refusing to worry or with relaxation exercises before bedtime
- Establish a relaxing pre-sleep ritual, such as a warm bath, light bedtime snack or ten minutes of reading
- Sleep in a dark, quiet, cool and comfortable room

Mask/Pillow Desensitization Techniques

Gradual initiation of CPAP is one accepted technique. Rather than having the patient immediately begin CPAP at the prescribed pressure, first let the patient become acquainted with the mask and the machine and become used to the idea that they need help to achieve maximum quality sleep. First start by holding the mask on your face without being attached to the tubing to adjust to having it on your face. Set the pressure on the CPAP machine to the lowest setting. When ready, allow the patient to control how quickly they adapt to it. Have the patient hold the mask loosely against his/her face for at least 1 minute or more. When they are comfortable with the mask in place, loosely strap the mask on their face, then adjust tighter until the leaks disappear. Once the patient is comfortable with the lowest pressure set the ramp feature to allow the pressure to slowly build up to the desired level. Let the patient breathe with the mask while it is ramping up with the patient sitting upright. When the patient seems comfortable with this, have them try to lie down with the mask in place.

For patients that seem to be claustrophobic or tell you that they are, it may be necessary to have the patient get used to the mask without the machine attached. It is usually most beneficial to have them do this away from the bedroom. No one is used to having to sleep with a mask on their face. Patients that state they can't get used to the idea of sleeping with a mask on their face are perfect candidates. Have the patient strap the mask on but open up the ports on the mask. It is often helpful if they wear the mask while doing something relaxing, such as watching TV or

listening to music, preferably not just before bedtime. Have the patient do it for a while each day, slowly increasing the amount of time they wear the mask until they can tolerate it.

They often may need to wear the mask with the CPAP machine turned on for a short time each day as well until comfortable with it. Patients who take off the mask during the night without knowing specifically why they do that usually do well with this method of wearing the mask while awake. Patients can also practice using the machine turned on at a low pressure (i.e. with the ramp feature turned on) while they are awake and doing something relaxing for an hour or 2 each day or evening until they can breathe with the machine. Using it for short naps during the day can also be beneficial and allows the patient to notice progress in getting acclimated to CPAP. Occasionally, the patient may require a different style of mask or nasal application device to achieve maximum compliance. Always remember that a humidifier has been proven to aid in the patients comfort as well as compliance. Continual encouragement at all stages of CPAP use and desensitization is helpful to patients.