

CPAP (Children’s Positive Airway Pressure) Program Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2022/23



The Benefits of Using CPAP or BiPAP™ Regularly

There’s no doubt that getting a child or teen to wear a mask every night is a challenge. Maybe it’s been a struggle to get into the habit of putting the mask on every night. Or maybe a recent change in life derailed your good child’s habit of wearing their mask nightly. Whatever the reason, remembering the “why” of wearing CPAP or BiPAP™ can give the needed motivation when it just seems too hard.

So what are some of the possible benefits of wearing CPAP for Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)?

- Improved energy, concentration, behavior, and sleep quality
- Better heart health and immune system
- Fewer morning headaches and less snoring

What about some potential benefits of BiPAP™ or a ventilator with a mask?

- Improved energy, shortness of breath, lung health, and sleep quality
- Better oxygen and carbon dioxide levels
- Fewer morning headaches

We know that you want the best possible health for your child. So thinking about these benefits can help if you feel tired out by the effort to help them wear their mask every night. However, for a child or a teen, these benefits may not be enough to motivate them to wear their mask. So, it’s important to talk to them to find out what their “why” is. Do they want to have more energy to have fun with their friends? Does your teen want to be alert and well rested during the day so they are allowed to get their driver’s license? Our CPAP team can also support you in developing a plan — you’re not alone in the struggle!

Inside this issue

- Benefits CPAP/BiPAP™ 1
- Skin Redness 2
- Adjusting Humidity..... 2
- Distilled Water 3
- Orthodontics 3
- Mask Warning 4



Seasonal Suggestion—Adjusting Humidifier for Cooler Weather

Cooler temps and dryer air are already here. Not only can this lead to needing more hand lotion, it can dry out the tissues in the nose, leading to more nasal congestion or even nose bleeds. This can be even more severe for CPAP and BiPAP™ users, because of the air blowing in their nose. If your child or teen complains of a dry nose or mouth, or more nasal congestion or nosebleeds, try increasing the humidity. The humidity may be set to “Auto”, which works a lot of the time, but it may need to be set to manual if the auto setting isn’t humid enough. If you need help increasing the humidity, please call one of our Respiratory Therapists at (414) 266-4924.



Ask a Respiratory Therapist—Help! What do I do if the mask causes skin problems?

Imagine this: you go in your child’s room because it’s time to wake up. You’re so happy because they wore their mask all night! But when you take it off, you see a red mark where the mask was. What do you do?



Skin redness and skin sores from CPAP and BiPAP™ masks are a common side effect.

Children can be more prone to have trouble with this than adults because they tend to move around more at night, which can lead to over-tightening the mask. Additionally, children and teens need to sleep more hours, which means the mask is putting pressure on the skin longer.

Skin problems from masks can vary from quite mild to severe. The red marks can be embarrassing for kids and teens. And moderate to severe skin problems can cause pain, infection, or scarring. So, it’s really important to know what to do if this problem comes up.

For red marks in the morning, look to see if they fade within an hour or so. If they do, then they are totally normal, just like how there can be red marks when a person takes their glasses off. If your child is new to CPAP or BiPAP™, there can be a short adjustment period where the skin redness lasts a few hours during the day. This is similar to breaking in a new pair of shoes. This shouldn’t last more than a few days.

If the red marks are still there after school, if they aren’t getting better, or if they are getting worse, you should reach out to your CPAP team. If long-lasting skin redness isn’t taken care of, it can lead to more serious problems like blisters or sores.

If you see a *blister or sore*, call one of our Respiratory Therapists at (414) 266-4924 **right away**. You can also reach out to your home care company.

Some things you can do to prevent or address skin redness:

1. Make sure you wash and dry the mask daily with soap and water. A build-up of skin oil and dirt can cause skin irritation.
2. If the mask is old, replacing the mask can resolve skin redness.
3. Check how tight the mask is. The mask should be fit as loosely as possible. A good rule of thumb is when the mask is on, your child should be able to easily slide a finger under the head straps on each side next to their nose or mouth. If they can’t, then the mask is too tight.

Your Respiratory Therapist may suggest other solutions, like a mask liner or trying a different kind of mask. The takeaway is not to try to deal with the skin redness or sores on your own. Our CPAP Team is just a phone call away!

Cleaning Corner—Using Distilled Water in the Humidifier

When your child’s CPAP or BiPAP™ machine was set up, you were likely told to use distilled water in the humidifier. But you might be tempted to just use bottled drinking water or even tap water. Why is it important to use distilled water?

Distilled water is made by boiling water and collecting the steam. This process eliminates minerals, bacteria, and chemicals. Whereas, bottled drinking water contains minerals that will cause a build up in the humidifier, which can damage the equipment over time. And tap water can also have bacteria and chemicals in it. So, using distilled water in the humidifier is the safest and healthiest choice.

What if the store is out of distilled water or you can’t get it for some other reason? As a short-term solution, you can use bottled drinking water or tap water that has been boiled and cooled. Be aware that there will be more build-up in the humidifier with this type of water.

To clean the build-up in humidifier’s water chamber, put a solution of 1 part white vinegar to 5 parts water and let it soak for 30 minutes. Rinse well and let dry before using.



Distilled Water

Parents Ponder—My Child Needs Orthodontics. Is There Anything I Need to Think About?

Braces and other orthodontics can not only help your child or teen have an even more beautiful smile, but also can improve their oral health as an adult by making sure that the jaw and teeth are correctly aligned. In some cases, it can even make more room in the mouth, which can improve the airway. However, is there anything to consider when your child also wears a mask at night?

Yes, actually. The first thing is to let your dentist or orthodontist know that your child uses CPAP or BiPAP™. Also, let the doctor or nurse practitioner that manages your child’s sleep know about the upcoming orthodontics. Our CPAP team will



work with you and your child to decide if the orthodontics will affect the sleep therapy.

One thing to consider is the type of mask your child is wearing. Some children will need to wear specialized headgear for part of their orthodontic treatment which could interfere with certain types of masks, like a full face mask. In this case, one of our respiratory therapists can explore different mask options.

Some kids with braces report discomfort if the mask rests on top of the braces. This could happen with a nasal mask or a full face mask. Again, a respiratory therapist can help your child find a mask that is more comfortable, like nasal pillows or a mask that rests under the nose.

Philips Respironics Mask Warning

On September 6th, 2022, Philips Respironics (a company that makes CPAP and BiPAP™ masks) issued a warning about the magnets in the masks pictured below. These magnets can interfere with implanted medical devices, either in the person wearing the mask or those near the mask (like caregivers). The Sleep Center recently sent a letter to all families with children that wear CPAP or BiPAP™. If you missed that letter, please check the masks pictured to see if your child uses one of those masks. If so, the FDA recommends switching to a non-magnetic mask if your child or anyone that is near to your child (within 6 inches) has one of the implanted medical devices listed in the warning.

Please look at the letter sent to you for a list of the medical devices. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's mask, please call the CPAP team at (414) 266-4924.



Figure 1:
Amara View
Full Face
Mask



Figure 2:
DreamWisp
Nasal Mask



Figure 3:
DreamWear
Full Face
Mask



Figure 4:
Wisp and
Wisp Youth
Nasal Mask



Figure 5:
Therapy
Mask 3100
NC/SP

Children's Wisconsin CPAP Program
9000 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53226

Sleep Lab: (414) 266-2790 #1
CPAP RT: (414) 266-4924
Pulmonary: (414) 266-6730
Central Scheduling: (414) 607-5280

Website: childrenswi.org/CPAP

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Kids deserve the best.