
Management Tips to Improve Adherence with Therapy

Snoring on PAP:

- Adjust mask/interface if leaking
- Ask bed partner if patient is opening mouth (apply chin strap)
- If there is no leaking around mask/interface and snoring continues, it is recommended that the patient have a follow-up visit or phone call to the primary care provider to reassess pressure level
- Ask if patient had alcohol before bed

Opening Mouth:

- Apply chin strap
- Change interface to full-face mask

Nasal Congestion or Runny Nose:

- Add or adjust humidifier (cool or heated) consider integrated heated tubing system
- Use nasal saline spray during the day and at bedtime
- Use nasal corticosteroid/anticholinergic spray
- Use antihistamine (oral or nasal spray)
- Change or clean machine filter
- If all of the above are ineffective, refer to primary care provider

Mask/Interface Leak:

- Adjust mask/interface straps, forehead pads or nasal cushion
- Refit mask/interface to different size
- Change to a different interface or full-face mask

Complaints of "Air Hunger"

- Check for mask/interface leak
- Check for mouth opening (apply chin strap)
- Increase low APAP level if on an autotitrating positive airway pressure device

Complaints of "Too Much Air," Can't Exhale:

- Use another type of PAP (flexible, B-PAP, or AutoPAP)
- Begin use of ramp/delay on machine
- Increase ramp/delay time
- Change interface
- Add humidifier (cool or heated)

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- Use nasal saline spray during the day and at bedtime
 - Apply chin strap if opening mouth
 - ENT consult for deviated septum or surgical options
 - Dental consult for oral appliance options

Nosebleeds:

- Add humidifier (cool or heated)
- Use nasal saline spray during the day and at bedtime
- Use water-soluble nasal saline gel in nares to moisturize

Claustrophobia:

- Try relaxation skills
- Try desensitizing techniques
- Wear PAP while awake and reading or watching TV to get used to equipment
- Consider referral for treatment of claustrophobia

Removing PAP without Knowledge:

- Add chin strap to help secure interface to head
- Safety pin headgear to nightclothes (this is used as a reminder during the night when awakening to keep mask/interface on head)
- Activate disconnect alarm (if available)

Bed Partner Complaints of Cold and Blowing Air:

- Different interface
- Redirect exhalation port if mask allows
- Place a barrier (e.g., pillow/blanket) between bed partners
- Place PAP on the floor

Complaints of Noise:

- Place PAP on the floor
- Wear earplugs
- White noise machine

Complaints of Sleepiness Despite Treatment:

- Reassess adequate sleep
- Reassess returned snoring on PAP
- Reassess sleep hygiene before bed
- Reassess if using PAP all night
- Leaking or poorly fitting mask/interface

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- Ask if mask is greater than six months old
 - Assess environmental noises (e.g., planes, buses and neighbors)
 - Assess bed partner or pet disturbances in bedroom
 - Ask if napping during the day and for how long
 - Assess bed partner complaints of leg movements
 - Assess bed partner complaints of bruxism (teeth grinding)
 - Consider retitration of PAP
 - Assess for use of alcohol less than two hours before bedtime
 - Ask if opening mouth at night while sleeping with PAP
 - Consider referral to a sleep specialist

Dental Device Complaints:

- Facial and/or tooth pain
- Appliance not retentive
- Dental occlusal changes
- Above complaints should prompt a return to dental practitioner for evaluation and treatment

Travel and Hospital Visits:

- Remind patient to bring PAP equipment when travelling or admitted to the hospital