

CPAP is a treatment - not a cure

Improvement in your day symptoms will only be maintained if you continue to use the CPAP machine nightly. You should take your machine on holiday with you. People take CPAP machines all over the world. We have a standard letter which is available for you to carry with you when you travel. Please request this by ringing 01642 824210.

CPAP machines can be used on boats and in caravans if you obtain a suitable inverter / battery.

If admitted into hospital for any reason it is very important that you inform the nurse / doctor about your CPAP treatment and please take your CPAP machine and mask to hospital with you.

Contact Numbers

If you have any problems with your mask e.g. ill-fitting, rubbing, air leaks etc. or with the machine, please contact the CPAP support team during office hours (8.30am – 4.30pm) on:
01642 282533 / 835837

Comments, compliments, concerns or complaints

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is concerned about the quality of care you receive and strives to maintain high standards of health care.

However we do appreciate that there may be an occasion where you, or your family, feel dissatisfied with the standard of service you receive. Please do not hesitate to tell us about your concerns as this helps us to learn from your experience and to improve services for future patients.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

This service aims to advise and support patients, families and carers and help sort out problems quickly on your behalf.

This service is available, and based, at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services. Please ask a member of staff for further information.

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Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)

Patient Information

Neurosciences -
Department of
Sleep Medicine

MICB1730

What is CPAP? (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure)

CPAP (pronounced “see pap”) is used as a treatment for obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome and to treat some other conditions.

How does it work?

CPAP works by delivering air into the upper airway via a mask covering the nose, or nose and mouth to keep the airway open during sleep. It prevents the airway from collapsing and improves your quality of sleep.

There are several kinds of CPAP machines.

A CPAP machine in use:



A CPAP machine:

There are several different types of mask systems available.



You will be fitted with a suitable mask system and given information on how to clean and care for this equipment.

You can also view on the trust website a short clip showing how to put on your mask and clean the equipment.

Starting CPAP

You will be seen by a member of the nursing team. A measurement of your neck size will be taken. Your CPAP pressure will be predicted by a calculation. You will be shown how to use your machine and how to put on your mask.

The appointment may take up to an hour after which you will be given your machine to take home.

Some patients need more in depth monitoring to decide on the pressure they will need. They will be given an Autoset machine on loan usually for a few days.

The Autoset machine automatically assesses the correct pressure each night it is used and after several days of use at home you will be asked to return to the hospital for the results to be analysed.

The correct pressure for you will then be set on another CPAP machine for you to take home for long-term use. The appointment can take up to an hour.

Patients with more complex problems may need to be admitted to the hospital overnight.

Continuing CPAP

It may take up to several weeks to become used to wearing the mask and this is normal. Other patients will use the mask successfully from night one.

You should find that if you were sleepy before, it soon makes you feel much more wide awake during the day.

You should sleep better when your sleep is no longer disturbed by obstructions to your breathing. This will lead to an improved quality of life.

Further information

Your CPAP machine comes with a booklet containing information on how to use your machine and mask.