

# CPAP (*Continuous Positive Airway Pressure*)

The air passages of the throat of some people become blocked or collapse while they are sleeping. This airway collapse causes a blockage, which can cause breathing to stop briefly. When breathing stops for a short time, it is known as apnea. Apnea is a serious condition and needs to be treated. CPAP is the most common treatment for obstructive sleep apnea. This condition is diagnosed by doing a sleep study.



CPAP is used to keep the air passages open while you sleep. A tube attaches to a mask that fits over your nose, or nose and mouth while you sleep. A constant flow of air through the tubing prevents the air passages in your throat from collapsing so your breathing does not stop.

CPAP needs to be used every time you sleep to stop the apnea from occurring. If it is not used or not used correctly, apnea will return. Always take your CPAP with you when traveling or if you are admitted to the hospital.

Evidence shows that **untreated** sleep apnea can cause several health issues, including heart disease and depression. It takes time to get used to wearing CPAP, and it is normal to take up to 3 months to begin to feel better. If the mask feels uncomfortable, have your mask changed or adjusted for more comfort. Contact us for help with any of your CPAP issues. Visit [www.arcnetwork.ca](http://www.arcnetwork.ca) for more information.



**Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.**