

Important points to note when purchasing and operating a CPAP respirator :

1. Before using CPAP respirator, sleep apnea patients should consult their doctors for assessment and prescription of the treatment plan.
2. Before choosing a respirator, one has to consider factors such as: the noise that may be generated, the size and weight of the respirator, international voltage compatibility and suitability for travelling and adequacy of space for placing the respirator beside the bed.
3. Apart from the price of the respirator, one should also consider the frequency of replacing the accessories and their prices.
4. Obtain information from the suppliers regarding maintenance details such as the scope of maintenance, availability of rental service during repair, and the price of replacement of components, etc.
5. Some suppliers offer home trial service. Users may rent a respirator and try it out before deciding to purchase.
6. Choose fit and comfortable nasal mask/face mask.
7. Users should familiarize with the operation of the respirator and its maintenance procedures.
8. Users should attend regular check up and seek medical advice if discomfort is experienced.



Obstructive Sleep Apnea and CPAP Respirator



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What is obstructive sleep apnea?

- Obstructive Sleep Apnea is a common sleep disorder. Studies showed that 4% of middle-aged men and 2% of middle-aged women in Hong Kong suffer from this disease.
- It occurs when tissues in the throat collapse and block the air passage resulting in temporary suspension of breathing (apnea) during sleep. People with this disorder will wake up due to lowered oxygen concentration in blood. They regain normal breathing after waking and fall asleep again. As such breathing pauses can happen repeatedly from tens to hundreds of times throughout the night, sleep quality will be heavily affected. This results in marked daytime sleepiness and impaired daily activities and work performance.
- If sleep apnea is not treated properly, it will overload the heart and lung function and may increase the risk of complications like hypertension, heart disease and stroke. Anyone who is suspected to suffer from sleep apnea should seek advice from doctor to decide if any investigation or treatment is needed.

What is CPAP respirator?

- C**ontinuous **P**ositive **A**irway **P**ressure (CPAP) respirator is a common device for treatment of moderate obstructive sleep apnea. Patients should use the CPAP respirator whenever they sleep.
- The respirator generates pressurized air which passes into the upper respiratory tract through the mask to keep the airway open throughout the breathing cycle.



Types of CPAP respirator

- There are two types of CPAP respirator, namely fixed-pressure CPAP respirator and auto-CPAP respirator. Fixed-pressure CPAP respirator delivers air at a preset level of air pressure while auto-CPAP respirator will automatically adjust the air pressure of the air supplied according to user's need.
- When the user's airway collapse, auto-CPAP respirator will increase the pressure of air supplied to the airway accordingly. After the airway becomes open, the respirator will respond by decreasing the air pressure. As the user is not exposed to a constantly high pressure, auto-CPAP respirators are more comfortable than fixed-pressure CPAP respirators. However, they are more expensive.

Basic accessories of CPAP respirator

Basic accessories of a CPAP respirator include a nasal/face mask, headgear, connecting tubing, respirator and humidifier.

- Affix a nasal/face mask to user's nose or face through a headgear, and connect it to the respirator through the connecting tubing. Switch on the respirator to generate pressurized air. The air then enters the upper airway through the tubing and mask and keep the airway open.
- In addition, a humidifier can be connected to the respirator in order to minimize irritation to the airway by dry air.



Maintenance and care of respirator accessories

The procedures for maintenance and care of accessories from different brands may vary. It is advisable to refer to manufacturer's instruction.

Accessories	Frequency of care	Ways to care
Nasal / Face Mask	Daily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean with diluted detergent and water. Hang to dry but avoid exposure to sunlight.
Headgear & connecting tube	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure it is dry before use.
Humidifier	Daily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean the reservoir of humidifier with filtered water or clean tap water, wipe with 70% alcohol and then air dry. Use sterile water* to fill the humidifier. Do not use distilled water. Sterile water should be removed daily to reduce the chance of legionella infection.
Respirator	Regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unplug the system and clean with a cloth moistened with mild detergent and water. Let the respirator dry completely before plugging in the power cord.
Dust filter	Regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean or replace the dust filter according to manufacturer's instruction.

* Sterile water can be purchased in most dispensaries.