

Keeping Your CPAP Equipment Clean

Proper care and maintenance of your CPAP equipment can help to ensure the device will function properly. It is vitally important to keep everything as clean as possible. The thorough cleaning of your CPAP equipment can be divided into daily and weekly cleaning.

Daily Cleaning

Soak your mask cushion in ammonia-free, mild dish soap and warm water. Swirl around occasionally for 15 minutes, rinse well and let air dry on a towel during the day. You can also wipe down your mask using a damp towel with ammonia-free, mild dish soap and warm water. Rinse and let the mask air-dry. You can also use pre-moistened CPAP Wipe designed specifically for cleaning CPAP masks. This cleaning will remove any oils, dead skin cells and sweat on the mask cushion that can affect the quality of the seal.

If your unit has a humidifier, empty any leftover water every morning instead of letting it sit in the unit all day. Refill the humidifier with clean, distilled water right before bedtime for optimal use.

If you've been sick, it's smart to wash your mask, tubing, humidifier, and filter daily until your cold, flu or virus symptoms are gone. That can help reduce the amount of time you spend sick.

Weekly Cleaning

Your mask, headgear, humidifier water chamber and tubing need a soaking bath once a week to keep it free of dust, bacteria, and germs. Clean these in a sink or container filled with warm water and a few drops of ammonia-free, mild dish soap.

Soak all parts and swirl around occasionally for 15 minutes, rinse well and let air dry during the day. Hang the tubing and headgear over the shower rod or on a towel rack to ensure all the water drips out. The mask and humidifier water chamber can be air-dried on a towel. You should also wipe down your CPAP machine with a damp cloth. The cloth shouldn't be too damp or wet, as water could get into the machine.

Don't wash your machine's disposable filter, if one is present. These should be replaced once a month. Just like your house filters, if the white filter is dirty, it should be replaced sooner than once a month.

Every other week you can disinfect the humidifier by adding a solution of one part vinegar to five parts water to the humidification chamber for 30 minutes and thoroughly rinse. Then soak in a sink filled with warm water and a few drops of ammonia-free, mild dish soap for 5 minutes, thoroughly rinse and allow to air dry. Keep it clean by using only distilled water to prevent mineral deposits that can build up and cause damage to your machine.

With a little upkeep, your CPAP can continue to help you breathe better for a long time. Just a few minutes a day can help keep your CPAP running efficiently for years to come.

If you have questions regarding your CPAP equipment, please call Principle Polysomnographic Technologist at UCDMC Sleep Laboratory at 916-731-1989.