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## **GETTING USED TO CPAP** rev 11Jun2007

Nasal continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is the accepted treatment for most patients with moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). Occasionally people have a hard time getting used to the mask or the pressure machine, and we recommend that everyone take a relaxed approach to get used to it. This treatment was published by Doctors Edinger and Radtke, from Duke University in 1993.

### **STEP 1:**

Wear the CPAP mask or nasal pillows at home while awake in the evening and performing normal evening activities, for about one hour daily. When you can do this without anxiety or concern for several days, or up to five consecutive days, then go to Step 2.

### **STEP 2: If you have done well in the lab, start here for one week, and also use at night if you are comfortable.**

Connect the pressure device and tubing to the CPAP machine, at the pressure prescribed by your doctor. Turn on the machine, and breathe through it at home and at rest, for one hour daily. When you can do this without anxiety or concern for up to five consecutive days, then go to Step 3.

When you are getting used to CPAP in Step 1 and Step 2, practice putting on the mask with your eyes closed. Experience how the pressure ramps up. Practice moving your head at full pressure, to get used to the mask leak and how to stop it. Let your bed partner and family members touch the CPAP so they are not afraid of it! Remember: CPAP is just pressurized air, not oxygen, so it isn't dangerous, and it won't blow up!

### **STEP 3:**

Wear the entire CPAP apparatus for a scheduled one hour nap. When you can do this without anxiety or concern for five consecutive days, then go to Step 4.

### **STEP 4:**

Wear the entire CPAP apparatus for 4-5 hours of sleep each night. When you can do this without anxiety or concern for five consecutive days, then go to Step 5.

### **STEP 5:**

Use CPAP for your entire night's sleep.

**For people who have had no difficulty using CPAP in the laboratory, we recommend that you begin at Step 2, then progress quickly to Step 5.**