

Using CPAP with Your Baby (Birth to 12 Months)

Getting started with continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)

Sleep is an important part of staying healthy for children of all ages. About 3% of children have a sleep disturbance called obstructive sleep apnea. If your baby has been prescribed a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine while sleeping, this handout offers tips to help you and your child adjust to CPAP.

It's your job to help your baby use CPAP during sleep. CPAP helps your child wake up rested and function well throughout the day. Using CPAP can become a normal part of your child's sleep routine and help keep your baby healthy.

How is my baby growing and developing?

Your baby is growing and changing quickly during the first year of life. Your baby spends a lot of energy growing and exploring the environment. This is a time when your baby is bonding with parents, caregivers and other family members.

What might happen

Tips for CPAP use

Babies cry to let you know their needs and wants. Your baby may cry in reaction to CPAP airflow.

- Introduce your baby to the CPAP mask and make the mask part of your baby's sleeping routine. Have a naptime and bedtime routine.
- Let your baby hold and feel the mask on their face to slowly get used to it.
- You may need to lead your baby through a process to help with adjusting to sleeping with CPAP or wearing the mask.

What might happen

Parents and other caregivers may be concerned about the baby's reaction to CPAP, since babies cannot let you know about the mask fit or other issues.

Tips for CPAP use

- Parents and other caregivers may be concerned about how the baby will tolerate the mask. Some may find it comforting to sleep in the same room with baby or to use a baby alarm. The alarm will alert you if your baby is having trouble breathing or if the mask needs adjusting.
 - Schedule and go to regular sleep clinic visits to check the mask fit and discuss other problems or concerns you may have. Talk with sleep clinic or home care staff about your concerns.
 - If your baby has special healthcare needs, stay in contact with your specialty clinics. They may be able to offer tips to help your baby adjust to wearing a mask and using CPAP.
 - Attend CPAP support group meetings.
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Helping your baby get used to CPAP

1. If your machine or humidifier makes noise or hums, turn it on when you walk into the room so your baby gets used to the noise.
 2. Let your baby hold or play with the mask with the tubing disconnected from the machine.
 3. Put the mask on a teddy bear or doll. You may wish to give your baby a doll or stuffed animal that wears a mask. Be sure that the mask is securely attached so it is not a choking hazard.
 4. Slowly move the mask closer and closer to your baby's face. Place the mask on their face for 1 minute and over time increase to longer periods of time, with the tubing disconnected from the machine. Your baby may find it comforting to be held during this process.
 5. Repeat steps 1 to 4 with the tubing connected to the machine and the machine turned on. There is no set period of time for this process, but do work with your baby every day at least a few times a day, rather than only before bedtime. If your baby can wear the mask during the day, your baby will be more likely to wear it at bedtime.
 6. Throughout the process, talk to your baby about CPAP while putting on the mask or getting ready for sleep.
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To Learn More

- Sleep Disorders Center
206-987-8938
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

7. Get masks or silly noses for family members to wear, such as toy animal noses, clown noses or a small plastic cup. Wear a mask or silly nose while your baby is wearing the CPAP mask. Use a book or quiet singing to help calm your baby.

Call your home care company with any questions or concerns about the mask, mask fit, or the machine.

For any concerns about your baby's health or breathing related to CPAP, call the Children's Hospital Sleep Disorders Center at 206-987-8938.

Sleep disorders resource

Jodi Mindell, *Sleeping Through the Night: How Infants, Toddlers and Their Parents Can Get a Good Night's Sleep.*

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers
206-987-2280 (TTY)

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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