

## Non-invasive ventilation (also called BIPAP)

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio tape or computer disk, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

### What is non-invasive ventilation?

Non-invasive ventilation (NIV) is a treatment to help with your breathing. NIV can improve sleep quality leading to better energy and concentration levels during the day. It can also make you feel less breathless than before. This may mean you may be able to perform more daily tasks. You may also feel brighter on waking and headache free if this was a problem previously. It can also reduce the likelihood of being re-admitted into hospital.

It involves wearing a mask connected to a machine via a hose which makes your breathing in and out easier and supports the muscles which make your lungs work. It is generally worn at night during sleep but can also be used during the day as well. The mask provided has been selected to fit your face and the machine has been specifically set for your breathing.

This is a long term loan machine. If you move out of area or no longer need it, then it must be returned to us.

### Cleaning

**Machine** should be kept clean using a damp cloth **weekly**. If your machine has a humidifier the heater plate and surrounding area also need to be kept clean to prevent bacteria growing there.

**Hose** needs to be rinsed through with warm soapy water **every week**. Hold both ends in one hand, covered by your palm; give a good shake, rinse through and then hang up to air dry.

**Mask cushion** needs to be removed from mask and rinsed out with warm soapy water daily and left to air dry.

The mask should not be over tightened and should sit on the face like a hovercraft cushion. When fitted correctly there should be minimal noise from it. The holes on the front of the mask allow the carbon dioxide in the air you breathe out to escape and should never be covered because this could cause suffocation. Over tightening will cause a mask leak and this should be avoided.

**Filters** in back of machine need to be checked for dust weekly and then changed every 3 months.

**Water pots** need to be washed out with warm soapy water on a daily basis, rinsed and left to air dry. Refill at night with clean water using either distilled water or cooled, boiled water and **do not allow them to run dry**.

**Spare battery** (not everyone has one of these) but if you have one it should always be charged in case of emergency. There is an on/off button on it and this should be set to off whilst not in use because this will discharge the battery.

No tape or wires should be added to these machines or their leads because this is a fire hazard.

## Potential side effects and solutions

**Claustrophobia** – feeling as though there is too much air pressure or feeling claustrophobic are common feelings when initially starting CPAP therapy. These feelings almost always disappear over time with patience and perseverance. To begin with you may find it helpful to practice with the mask by sitting quietly in a chair either watching TV or listening to music just to get yourself used to it and take your mind off it. This will help you to relax and feel comfortable before you use it at night.

**Dryness** – this can occur in your mouth, nose or throat whilst using CPAP treatment. If this occurs you may need a humidifier added to your machine which can be done at your next appointment if required. However the dryness may settle after a few days of being on treatment and may only be an initial reaction.

**Cold air** – if you find that the air is too cold, try increasing your humidity setting, otherwise you can try putting the hose under a fleece or blanket. Always ensure that the humidified CPAP machine is kept lower than the level at which you sleep.

## DVLA

DVLA guidelines currently state that NIV therapy must be used every night for a minimum of 4 hours per night. If the DVLA ask your consultant for a compliance report and our data indicates that you are not meeting this criteria then your licence may be withdrawn.

## Follow-up

Your first follow-up appointment will normally be within 4-6 weeks of starting on treatment. You will then have at least an annual outpatient clinic follow-up. Please ensure that you bring your machine to every clinic follow-up including the electric lead, hose and mask. We need to check this equipment and access data from the machine.

## Travel

If you need to travel overseas please ask for a travel letter which we will be happy to provide for you. When travelling on an aircraft your CPAP machine should be checked in as hand luggage and not put into the hold of the aircraft.

## Contact details

If you have any further queries please don't hesitate to contact the Respiratory Nurses on 01271 311600. However because we are not an emergency service please be aware that it may take us 3 working days to get back to you.

We work Monday – Friday, 8.00am – 4.00pm

We are: Lynn Greenfield and Sharon Newcombe

## References

Sleep Apnoea Trust Association

Freephone 0800 025 3500

PO Box 60, Chinnor, Oxon, OX39 4XE

Obstructive sleep apnoea and driving ([www.gov.uk/obstructive-sleep-apnoea-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/obstructive-sleep-apnoea-and-driving))  
Last updated October 2015

DVLA

Tel: 0300 790 6806 or

[www.gov.uk/contact-the-dvla/y/](http://www.gov.uk/contact-the-dvla/y/) and then click on 'driving and medical issues'

Tiredness can kill – Advice for drivers (INF159) ([www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth](http://www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth))

MND Association

Tel: 01604 250505

Email: [enquiries@mndassociation.org](mailto:enquiries@mndassociation.org)

Website: [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or e-mail [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust  
Raleigh Park, Barnstaple  
Devon EX31 4JB  
Tel. 01271 322577  
[www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk)

© Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust  
This leaflet was designed by the Communications Department.  
Please contact 01271 313970 to help us improve our leaflets