

Effective Interventions to Improve CPAP Compliance and Adherence

When it comes to treating Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) is considered the gold standard. Although CPAP is a proven way to treat OSA, its effectiveness is not guaranteed only because it relies on a person continuing to use the machine (Jin et.al, 2008). Since OSA is a chronic disease, CPAP therapy is often a life-long treatment and therefore it is important to view it in a positive light considering it can be a true “fountain of youth” to so many people.

However, low patient compliance has long been a significant concern that came along with CPAP treatment. Unfortunately, many patients start to feel better (have a reduction in symptoms) and then stop using it. However slowly those symptoms and side effects begin to return. Studies do show however that adherence rates can be improved. Depending on the criteria being followed: definition of adherence, duration of the follow-up and patient profile the adherence rates of patients on CPAP therapy ranges between 30% and 85% (Sin et.al., 2002; McArdel et.al., 1999; Baratta et.al., 2018). On a positive note, it is possible to achieve a higher adherence rate.

Five factors that can positively influence a patients' long-term success with PAP treatment:

1. If you have a partner, their support can make a major difference.

As evidenced by qualitative studies (Elfström et al., 2012; Henry & Rosenthal, 2013), support from partners is a clear motivator for CPAP use. Results from the study showed that after continuous CPAP treatment, partners experienced increased overall sleep and improved sleep quality leading to resumption of bed sharing and improved marital quality. With this, having a partner be part of the initial PAP education is recommended.

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- Great Prices



2. Learn more about CPAP Therapy. If possible, download and use any software or app the already comes with your machine so you can monitor your usage.

Reading educational materials including the manual as well as knowing how to monitor usage with freely available apps can make a big difference. McArdle et.al., 2019 found that increased patient education and more intensive educational strategies can improve compliance. It also helps when patients can easily contact care providers when they encounter difficulties.

3. Always attend follow-up appointments.

Your sleep care provider should conduct regular follow-up appointments to check on your treatment success as well as suggest strategies or make adjustments to therapy if there are issues or concerns in an effort to improve long term consistent usage. A study by (Galetke et.al., 2011) proved that education sessions and close follow-ups are possible strategies to improve patient adherence and compliance.



4. If you experience any discomfort, or unlikeable side effects, contact your sleep care provider right away.

A study by (Galetke et.al., 2011) 24.1% of patients complained about side effects such as leakage and skin irritation. In cases like this, we suggest that you do not immediately discontinue treatment, instead contact your sleep care provider and ask for help.

5. Lastly, improve self-management. Help yourself.

Have an open mind to the possible benefits to treating your OSA. Motivate yourself to use your device nightly. Remind yourself about the long-term benefits of treatment and how regular usage may actually reduce premature aging. Make use of the technology available and pay attention to improvements in how you feel.

References:

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