

Coronavirus/COVID-19 FAQs for Sleep Apnea Patients

1. Do I have an increased risk of getting COVID-19 because I have sleep apnea?

People with an increased risk of complications from the coronavirus include patients with heart disease, diabetes, lung disease and kidney disease. As well, immunocompromised patients and the elderly.

2. Should I use my CPAP machine if I have signs or symptoms of COVID-19?

Follow the Government of Canada recommendations, or ask your family physician. Using a CPAP/APAP/BiPAP machine creates DROPLETS. This can spread to other members of your family within your home. Sleeping in a separate bedroom, and keeping your door closed at all times, can reduce the risk of spread.

3. Will using my CPAP help my breathing if I have COVID-19? Can it make my breathing worse?

Please consult your family physician with these concerns.

4. How should I clean my equipment and how often?

Clean your equipment daily in warm, soapy water. Do not reuse water or leave it sitting in your humidifier. Rinse equipment well, and wash your hands before putting your equipment on. Make sure you clean and change the filter in your machine as well.

5. I cannot find distilled water. Can I use other water temporarily?

You can use bottled spring water, but make sure to empty and dry the chamber out each morning so minerals do not accumulate in it.

6. How often should I replace my CPAP parts, and how can I do this during the pandemic?

Manufacturers of CPAP supplies recommend replacing equipment every 6 months to a year, due to regular wear and tear, as well as bacteria and mold accumulation. You can contact us Tuesday – Friday 8am-4pm at (519) 631-2030 ext. 2231 to order supplies.

7. Can I use my CPAP machine as a Ventilator?

No. A CPAP machine is not designed to act as a ventilator. If you are experiencing shortness of breath, and feel like you need help to breathe, please come to Emergency here at STEGH, or call 911.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please call the CPAP Clinic at St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital at (519) 631-2030 ext. 2231 to speak with a Respiratory Therapist.

Visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html> for up-to-date information about the Coronavirus.