



## Getting the right fit

Some people feel the benefits of CPAP therapy right away, while others need time to get used to the mask and air pressure. If you are struggling to get used to CPAP therapy, the steps below can help you adjust more comfortably. Start at the point that feels right for you and if you are struggling try an earlier step.

**GOAL:**  
Using for entire duration of sleep

**TIP:** With 4 hours use a night, CPAP can improve sleepiness, function and health. More time spent using CPAP each night will result in greater benefit!

**Almost there:**  
Use for more hours every night

**EXAMPLE:** Begin aiming for 30min to an hour of use every night and steadily increase aiming to use for more than four hours every night.

**Trial Run:**  
Use during a daytime nap or the beginning of sleep

**EXAMPLE:** Schedule a nap in a recliner, or on the couch.  
**TIP:** Limit naps to a few attempts, because frequent naps can affect sleep quality!  
**EXAMPLE:** Trial at the beginning of sleep – it's ok if you remove it and go back to sleep

**Get used to the pressure:**  
Wear the mask with the machine on while awake

**EXAMPLE:** apply the mask with the machine on when watching the TV or relaxing either before bed, or during the day. This could be on the couch, in a recliner, or in bed.  
**TIP:** aim for as little as 10min to begin with and gradually increase the duration.

**Get comfy:**  
Wear the mask alone when awake

**EXAMPLE:** apply the mask in the evening; leave it on whilst walking around, doing chores, or something you enjoy such as watching TV or playing video games.

## Recognising unhelpful thoughts

Is the thought making you irritated?  
Is it helping achieve your goals?  
Are you being too hard on yourself?

**Examples of unhelpful thoughts:**

**Guilt motivation:**

“If I don’t use my CPAP every night, I’ve failed.”

**All-or-nothing thinking:**

“This feels uncomfortable — it’s just not going to work.”

**Fortune telling:**

“I’ll never get used to this.”

**When you catch an unhelpful thought revisit your goals...**

- Feel more alert
- Sleep better and feel more rested
- Focus better
- Reduce my risk of being in a car accident
- Make fewer bathroom trips
- Improve mood
- Reduce my snoring for my bed partner
- Reduce blood pressure
- Reduce risk of heart attack and stroke
- Stay healthy and out of hospital

**Can you turn it into a helpful thought?**

**Example:** “This mask is uncomfortable, I should ask the SCC team for a different mask”

## Common Issues and How to Fix Them

Here are some tips to fix common issues at home, but don't hesitate to contact the SCC team if problems persist!

Problem	Solution
Air leaking from the mask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make small adjustments to the straps.</li><li>• Avoid tightening too much as this can create more air leak.</li><li>• If you feel comfortable, loosen the straps and hold the mask to your face until the leak disappears, then have a friend or family member secure it in that position with the straps.</li><li>• If this doesn't work, see the SCC team for help or a different mask.</li><li>• People with a beard or moustache may find it helpful to trim.</li></ul>
It's hard to sleep in your usual position with the mask	If you sleep on your side or your front and find the pillow gets in the way of your mask see the SCC team to look at a different mask or tubing style.
Discomfort from high pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Getting used to the pressure can take time (see "Getting comfortable with your mask").</li><li>• Some people find the "Ramp" function helpful which temporarily lowers the pressure until you fall asleep. You can trial this by turning this feature on or see the SCC team to set it up for you.</li><li>• High pressures can also occur if there is air leaking from the mask, which is discussed above.</li></ul>
Dry Mouth or too much moisture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your machine has a humidity setting which you can increase if your mouth or nose is dry, or reduce if needed.</li><li>• Additional sprays and washes or mask changes can also be considered, which you can discuss with the SCC team.</li></ul>
Eye irritation	This can be caused by air leaking from the mask, which is discussed above.
Headache or skin irritation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Like a new pair of shoes it might take a while for your mask to feel comfortable.</li><li>• If headache or skin irritation develops this might be because the mask is too tight, so try loosening the straps.</li><li>• There are mask changes and liners which may also help, which you can discuss with the SCC team.</li></ul>