

PAP Mask Discomforts

Could my PAP mask be causing my facial irritation?

If the PAP mask or cushions are dirty, they could be irritating your face causing redness or breakouts on the area that contacts your skin.

- ✓ **Do** wash your mask/cushions daily
- ✓ **Do** use a mild warm soap solution like Dawn™ or regular baby shampoo.
- ✓ **Do** let your mask air dry completely before wearing.
- ⊗ **Do not** use scented or harsh soaps with perfumes, dyes or moisturizers to wash your mask.

I am washing my mask in a mild soap daily and I still have a rash. What should I do?

Sometimes people might have a reaction to the actual mask material. You can try a mask liner like RemZzz.® which provides a thin, cotton-like barrier between the skin and the mask to add additional comfort and protection. Other stated product benefits are to:

- ✓ Reduce or eliminate air leaks
- ✓ Prevent skin irritations and pressure marks
- ✓ Help to absorb facial moisture and oils

This item is not covered by insurance and is a private pay item. Another product to help with your rash or mask irritation is specific CPAP mask lotions like RoEzIt® Dermal Care.

- ✓ If you suspect you are having a reaction to your mask and it is **under** 30 days old, schedule an appointment for a mask re-evaluation to try another type.

Why are my eyes dry or watery?

If air is leaking out of the mask and into your eyes, try the following fixes:

- ✓ Adjust the strap to get a better fit. If the device fits over your nose, make sure it doesn't sit too high on the bridge of your nose, which will direct air into your eyes.
- ✓ Re-adjust the mask while the PAP pressure is on. Lift the mask from your face, once it refills with air, let it back down on your face at a lower place on the bridge of your nose.
- ✓ If you have tried both of these adjustments without success, there may be a need for a mask re-evaluation with a PAP technician. If you have had a recent weight change, a new size mask may be required. Another option may be a different style of mask that contours your face. Insurance requirements and coverage varies.

Why do I have a dry, stuffy nose?

If the humidity level is too low, continuous air movement can dry out your nose/nasal passages.

- ✓ Increase humidity level on your machine. It works with the humidification level of the home, or environment. The level of humidity required will differ between seasons.
- ✓ Try a nasal saline spray. Using a nasal spray at bedtime can help moisturize your nasal passages. Saline spray can be purchased at your local pharmacy.
- ✓ Try heated tubing. Using heated tubing will increase the amount of humidity you receive from your machine. Insurance requirements and coverage varies with this item.

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- ✓ Talk to your doctor about nasal decongestants. If increasing the level of humidification and/or adding a saline spray offer you no relief from a dry stuffy nose, speak to your doctor about adding a nasal decongestant.

Why is my mouth dry?

If you are sleeping with your mouth open, you will have a dry mouth.

Possible solutions are:

- ✓ Use a chinstrap. Some PAP devices may worsen dry mouth and a chin strap may keep your mouth closed and reduce the amount of air leak if you wear a **nasal** mask.
- ✓ Change to a **full face** mask that covers your mouth and nose, may be an option for you to help with your dry mouth.
- ✓ Increase the humidifier setting on your unit, based on comfort level. The humidification level of the home and environment will differ between seasons.

Aerophagia- swallowing of air

Why do I feel bloated?

Some new PAP users feel bloated or full of air after starting their PAP therapy. This can be caused by swallowing too much air from the PAP therapy.

- ✓ Breathe normally when wearing your machine.
- ✓ Change your sleeping position. Sleeping on your side or in an elevated position may help you to breathe normally, and avoid gasping or taking in large amounts of air.
- ✓ Try Auto PAP pressure. These therapy devices automatically adjust the therapy pressure to suit your personal breathing patterns by reducing the periods of time when your pressure is more than what is necessary for effective therapy. Discuss this option with your doctor.

Could my beard be causing my mask leak?

It is possible that your beard or mustache may be causing your mask not to have a good seal.

1. Consider trimming your beard or mustache so the cushion from the mask will have direct contact to the skin.
2. Try using a mask liner, such as RemZzz® which provides a thin, cotton-like barrier between the skin stated product benefits are to:
 - Reduce or eliminate air leaks.
 - Prevent skin irritations/reduce pressure marks.
 - Help to absorb facial moisture and oils.

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3. Change the mask style and ask to be fitted with a nasal system. **Note:** You may not be a candidate for a nasal pillow system if you need a high pressure setting. Insurances will need to be verified to see how often a replacement mask is covered.

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