

News on sleep apnea for the commercial trucking industry

Overcome your CPAP ANXIETY

By Katia LaManna, LCSW

Let's face it, CPAP treatment is difficult. There is nothing natural about sleeping with a cumbersome mask/hose and inhaling/exhaling against air pressure during the night. For most people, the whole idea of CPAP treatment can seem overwhelming, quickly leading them to become discouraged and give up on treatment.

Truck drivers, specifically, face many challenges when it comes to using and adhering to CPAP treatment while on the road. You must deal with tight sleeping quarters, power supply issues as well as unfavorable weather conditions – all of which can make the whole CPAP experience difficult.

Therefore, it is not all that uncommon for many truck drivers to feel anxious when starting CPAP treatment.

Anxiety to CPAP must be addressed quickly in order to ensure future treatment adherence and success (particularly in the first two weeks of treatment).

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The following suggestions are helpful in managing your initial anxiety to CPAP treatment:

- Request to have a dedicated clinician assigned to your case
- Develop an open and close relationship with your clinician (this can be done over the phone as well)
- Initially you may need 2-4 outreach calls per week from your clinician
- Ensure that you have received adequate information and education not only about your CPAP unit and treatment, but also with regard to your diagnosis
- Patience, patience, patience...

PPD: Protecting Professional Drivers is a production of Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics, specializing in premium news and analysis on sleep apnea for the commercial trucking industry, and is published 2-4 times a year.

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Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics (PPD), provides professional screening for drivers who are at risk for sleep apnea. This is a HIPPA-compliant, online tool customized to a company's requirements.

Once a driver has been diagnosed with sleep apnea, PPD will provide local diagnostic services with the ease of Web-based scheduling and quick, reliable turn-around – from diagnosis to treatment.

Drivers who require treatment will be fitted for and provided with a CPAP mask, flow generator, and heated humidifier for nightly use.

In order to ensure drivers are using their masks correctly, PPD has partnered with a leading manufacturer of CPAP equipment, masks, and the only provider of a patented wireless compliance monitoring system.

The wireless compliance monitoring system provides daily information of CPAP use, efficacy, and allows real-time troubleshooting of any problems your drivers may be experiencing. With this data, we can enhance your drivers' CPAP acceptance and long-term compliance. In short, our protocols can maximize your results and your return on investment.

Dear Readers,

Persons with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) have a greater rate of motor vehicle accidents than those without OSA. Multiple studies have quantified this excess risk as anywhere from 2 to 7 times greater than drivers without OSA. Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) treatment lowers this accident risk back to normal. A recent study published in the British medical journal Thorax suggests that this greater motor vehicle accident risk occurs in all severities of OSA – even in mild cases. Dr. Alan Mulgrew of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, studied 783 adult patients who were referred for possible OSA. He found that patients with OSA had between 2 and 2.6 times greater risk for motor vehicle crashes and the severity of those crashes was 3 to nearly 5 times greater than crash severity in non-OSA drivers. Interestingly, the greatest increased risk for a motor vehicle crash occurred in drivers with mild OSA.

Currently, Schneider National drivers diagnosed with sleep apnea of any severity are required by their employer to be treated for OSA. Preventive crash data from Schneider National demonstrates that the accident rate in CPAP-treated OSA drivers is reduced 30% from pre-CPAP treatment and the average cost of those preventive accidents is reduced by 48%.

PPD is committed to our client's most valuable resource – their drivers. Effective therapy for OSA reduces the risk for motor vehicle accidents, adverse cardiovascular events, and stroke. It also improves blood pressure control in those with high blood pressure and helps with blood sugar control in diabetics.

All of us at PPD stand ready to help you become and remain compliant with therapy for OSA.

Safe Travels,

Mark B. Berger, MD FCCP

President

Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics LLC

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Travelers' tips for flying with your CPAP machine

By Ken Walker
AllBusiness.com



A CPAP machine is a godsend for people who have a sleeping disorder. The only trouble is it doesn't travel well. So, how do you care for such a thing when you know TSA security will want to have a look at it?

Here's what I've learned over the past few years:

Try to wean yourself off of the water tank. Traveling without the tank, the distilled water, etc., gives you so much more room and so much less hassle.

If you need the tank, be 100 percent certain the water tank in your unit is completely dry before you pack it. It only takes a single drop of water to wreak a lot of expensive damage in the main unit. Packing and carrying the unit around will distribute any droplets of left-over water, and you certainly don't want that to happen, so dry it out very well!

If you travel with the unit as a carry-on, be sure to take it out and have it ready for security. They should be trained on what a CPAP machine is and how to examine it. When you give it to them, explain, "Sir, this is a CPAP machine and it is very expensive. I understand you need to check it out but would you please be careful with it?"

Ultimately, I found carrying the CPAP machine with me through the airport was more dangerous to the machine than checking it in a bag. Casual bumps, stairs or escalators put stress onto the machine it wasn't designed for.

When you pack your CPAP in a checked bag, wrap it in a T-shirt, then secure it on all six sides with sock bundles, shirts, and other soft items. Make sure the packed items are fairly "tight" when you close your suitcase so they don't slide back and forth.

Pack an extra "2-port" outlet so you can actually plug in the hotel's alarm clock, lamp, as well as your CPAP machine.



Ken Walker is a traveling technical trainer in California who makes his home in Minneapolis, MN.

Did You Know...

According to cross-sectional studies published in the New England Journal of Medicine, sleep apnea occurs in one in four men and one in 10 women.

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Anxious drivers very often take a longer time becoming acquainted with CPAP treatment and may experience more problems such as Claustrophobia and mask and pressure sensitivities.

Techniques that might work in helping you overcome your anxiety include the following:

- Be patient with yourself and your treatment expectations

- Breakdown treatment expectations into smaller achievable goals
- With the guidance of your clinician, work on a few desensitization techniques
- Are you Claustrophobic?
- Consider a lightweight or hybrid mask
- With the supervision of a clinician- adjust CPAP to lower pressures (initially- if helpful)
- Patience, patience, patience.....

Everybody is different in their adjustment to CPAP treatment. There is no cookie-cutter mold approach. What works for one person may be an absolute failure in another. It's important to remain open and patient to treatment suggestions and in time you are more likely to conquer your anxiety associated to CPAP treatment.

What are some of your success stories overcoming your anxiety to CPAP treatment? Email your answers to katia@ppdsleep.com.



Good Night Sleep

One driver's journey through sleep apnea diagnosis and treatment

Sleep apnea cannot be handled like a bad haircut, according to commercial driver Ken Armstrong. "Time will not solve it."

Instead of letting one more day of shortened driving time and tiredness go by, the 57-year-old Swift driver became the first in his company to undergo the "Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics (PPD) treatment experience."

"I was originally diagnosed with sleep apnea in 1998 while living in Chicago," Armstrong said. "I had surgery to repair a deviated septum which partially corrected the condition. However, as I got older and gained weight, my sleep apnea gradually worsened to the point that further treatment was necessary."

Armstrong, with the help of PPD, went in for a sleep study.

"You show up. You talk to the technician," he said during a video interview with PPD. "The technician explains what's going to take place during the next 10 or 12 hours. You do it in a comfortable bedroom environment. There's nothing clinical about it. So it takes about 20 minutes to get all wired

up. Then they shut the lights off and say 'here, you want to watch TV for a bit' until you get tired and go to sleep."

Once Armstrong was diagnosed with sleep apnea, PPD reached out to him on a regular basis to support and troubleshoot. PPD was also available via phone to discuss any issues at any time. PPD also pays critical attention to newly diagnosed drivers to help him/her adhere to therapy. PPD helps with pressure settings, mask fits, what to do in unique situations a driver may struggle with, and more.

"I have been extremely pleased with the driver support that I've received from PPD staff," he said. "PPD's level of support is a quality of professionalism that has helped keep me rolling, no matter where I am or where I'm headed. Drivers need that. PPD delivers."

From start to finish, from his sleep-study through to regular follow-up, PPD has been extremely positive and helpful, Armstrong said; especially when it came to his CPAP machine.

"That's breathing machine, that mask, it's no different than a pair of eyeglasses, orthopedic footwear, a knee brace," Armstrong said in his video interview.

"These are all things people use ... to make their lives easier and better. The

breathing mask, for me to have it on at night, it's no different. I have to accept that because that's my ticket to a good night sleep."

And how did his family react?

"At first, my family was a little leery of my CPAP machine," he said, "especially our cats who sat in studied silence while they listened intently to my breathing and the machine."

However, as his family witnessed how quickly Armstrong responded to the treatment, "they quickly became believers."

Today, Armstrong's treatment has turned his life around.

"Today, I am a better, safer driver who is more alert and focused," he said. "I have a lot more stamina and am able to now drive a full 11 hours without losing energy or alertness."

This is important for the 8-year Swift veteran who now mentors new drivers as well as delivers loads in the continental United States and Canada.

"Before I began my treatments, that would have been absolutely impossible," he said. "I'd have been stopping for rest after only three or four hours of driving." And now he has something to say to other drivers debating testing and treatment for sleep apnea.

"Improve your health, your quality of life," he said. "Here's your chance to make a life-changing experience you will not regret."

To view Armstrong's full video interview, including footage of his sleep study, visit www.ppdsleep.com

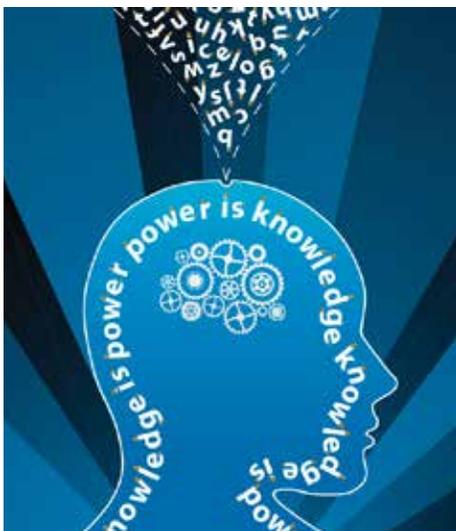
Sleep contributes to creative thinking, better memory

Sleep is not just good for your body. New research suggests it helps improve memories and creative thinking.

A new study published in *Current Directions in Psychological Science* explain how catching those zzz's help solidify memories for retrieval at a later time and help organize them, allowing for production of new ideas.

According to the research, the most common memories are emotional. If someone sees an image of something emotional, the image is largely forgotten after sleeping. However, after analyzing a sleeping brain, the researchers found parts of the brain associated with memory consolidation and emotion to be active.

A sleeping brain is actually working extremely hard to group memories, organize them, and understand which are most important. Researchers believe this function of the brain is what allows new, creative thinking in individuals. And when people miss sleep, it can significantly hamper cognitive abilities, although you they can still function through the day.



Men who work with wives, girlfriends more likely to stick with CPAP therapy

Men who work with their wives or girlfriends are more likely to adhere to their CPAP treatment, according to a research abstract released by Kelly Glazer Baron, PhD, postdoctoral fellow at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.

The abstract indicated that it wasn't the encouragement, the use of negative tactics (such as evoking fear or blame) and reminding that did the trick. Instead, men were more apt to adhere to therapy if they believed their relationships were more supportive. Baron said that, which we know in many health conditions,

having a supportive partner can improve adherence and emotional well being when dealing with a chronic illness, his study was the first in CPAP treatment to show the same response.

The study obtained demographic and relationship quality information from 23 married/cohabitating male OSA patients before CPAP initiation, and included adherence data from 14 men. Partner involvement with CPAP was assessed at day 10 and three months post CPAP initiation using 25-item measure of tactics to encourage healthful behavior.

How to pass your DOT exam

How often have you been stopped by a DOT examiner and given a 3-month card due to your high blood pressure? Did you know that untreated sleep apnea raises your blood pressure and, at times, even medication cannot keep it under control? Treating sleep apnea with a CPAP machine will not only help your blood pressure, but medical research has shown treatment with CPAP helps:

- Gastric Reflux Disorder
- Diabetes
- Anxiety and depression
- Heart conditions and strokes

- Erectile dysfunction
- Obesity
- Fatigue

It is amazing what happens when your body gets its daily dose of the necessary oxygen while you sleep. To no longer have the back of your throat or nasal passages close up delivers that critical air flow. If your DOT examiner needs additional information, feel free to ask PPD for assistance. Our goal is to help get you certified by a DOT examiner by diagnosing and treating your sleep apnea and improving other medical conditions that may coexist with your sleep apnea.