

# Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) and Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)



## Information for parents and carers

This information leaflet explains Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) and Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP). If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to any member of the team caring for your child.

### Confirming your identity

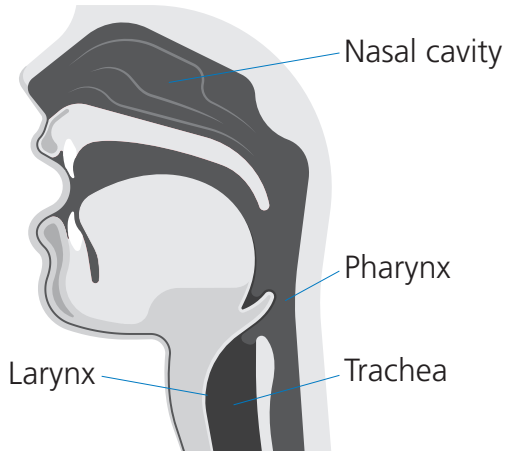
Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

**If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.**

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

## What is obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA)

It is a condition affecting your child's airway and how they breathe.



When they are asleep their muscles relax and this causes the airway to fall in on itself. This narrowing can cause snoring. When more effort is needed to breathe, this causes more narrowing of the airway. During this stage their body senses that it is having difficulty breathing and they wake briefly.

## What are the symptoms?

- Loud snoring with short periods where breathing stops
- Sleeping in unusual body positions
- Frequently waking throughout the night
- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Struggling to breathe
- Headaches
- Difficulty concentrating
- Poor growth/weight gain
- Difficulty concentrating
- High blood pressure



## How is OSA diagnosed?

Your child will have a sleep study to see if they have OSA. This involves an overnight stay in the hospital during which we check your child's quality of sleep, breathing pattern and heart rate while they are asleep.

## How common is it and who is affected?

OSA affects adults and children. People with certain conditions, including obesity, sickle cell disease and Down syndrome, may be at higher risk of the condition, but it is treatable.

## What causes OSA?

The main causes are:

- conditions that make your child's upper airway narrower, such as enlarged tonsils and adenoids
- conditions that make their upper airway more 'collapsible', such as obesity and Down syndrome
- changes in the structure of their face such as a small chin, or narrow or floppy airways (laryngomalacia)
- rare diseases of the nerves or muscles.

## How is OSA treated?

If your child is overweight or obese, losing weight can help to control OSA.

Your child's respiratory consultant will decide if continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is the best treatment option.

We may also arrange an appointment for your child to see an ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgeon. They will check for problems with your child's airway that they can correct with an operation, such as enlarged tonsils and adenoids.

## What is continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)?

It is a way of giving your child a continuous flow of air through a mask. This helps to keep their airway open and support their breathing at night. When used correctly, CPAP can help improve their quality of sleep and the symptoms they have during the day.

## How do I explain CPAP to my child?

Explain to your child that this machine helps them to breathe well at night, so they can have a good night's sleep and feel better in the day.

Your child should get into a routine of using their CPAP every night. It is vital that you support them to make this treatment a success.

- Babies will not understand what CPAP is, so simply place the mask on your child at bedtime.
- Infants will probably be more difficult because they may refuse to wear the mask or be frightened of it. It is important that they are familiar with the mask. You can put them at ease through play. If they are scared of it you can help by letting them fall asleep with the mask on, then starting the pressure when they are asleep.
- You can explain to older children how the CPAP machine works. But they may become fed up with their treatment at times. This is why explaining their treatment to them is so important, so they know what the CPAP machine is, why they need it and how it helps them.



*CPAP machine*



## Useful information

Our office hours are 9am -5pm, Monday to Friday  
Paediatric Respiratory CNS  
Tel: **020 3299 5480** or **0203 299 5422**

## How to look after the CPAP equipment

### CPAP machine

Wipe with a clean damp cloth.

### Air filter

Replace the air filter about once every six months, more often if it is greying or dirty.

### CPAP mask, headgear and tubing

Disconnect and air the mask and tubing from the CPAP machine every day. Wash them at least once a week and more often if needed. To do this, take the mask apart and separate the headgear parts, mask frame and soft cushion. Hand wash in soapy water. Rinse all the parts well and allow them to air dry, away from direct sunlight.

## What do I do if the CPAP machine breaks or the supplies break or malfunction?

Most children will be fine one night without their CPAP treatment. But if your child has a rare condition they may need the treatment every night. Your doctor will tell you if this is the case with your child.

If you have a problem outside of office hours, please call us the next morning. We will work with you and your local health agency to service the machine or replace supplies.

If you have a problem during office hours, please contact us immediately and we will try to resolve it before bedtime.



Your child's name	
CPAP machine type	
CPAP settings	
Mask type	
Headgear type and size	

## **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

**PALS at King's College Hospital**, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS:

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **[kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net)**

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email [kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net).**

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