

Don't let traveling with your CPAP slow you down this summer!

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Travel season is near, and certainly no one wants to be limited by the fact that they require the use of a CPAP machine every night. It is extremely important not to miss a single night of your sleep therapy with your Continuous Positive Air Pressure (CPAP) machine, even while on the road. Using your CPAP regularly and consistently is crucial to effective therapy, even when you're not at home in the comfort of your own bed. The good news is that many CPAP machines are extremely lightweight and fully portable. And luckily, recent advances in technology and design have produced more options for the CPAP user who travels, allowing you to pack up your CPAP machines and head to other destinations!

Pack your CPAP

The best way to travel with your CPAP machine is to buy a CPAP carrying case, if you don't already have one. Transit can be rough and tumble, and if your CPAP is in a suitcase with something heavy, or in an unpadded case, it may get broken.

Traveling by Air

When traveling by air with your CPAP, contact your airline before you leave to check for any special requirements or restrictions. Security may require you to show the medical statement from United Sleep Medicine or other prescribing physician verifying that you are carrying medical equipment. Having printed proof of official regulations to show at the airport will be important if you come across a customer service agent or TSA baggage handler who is unfamiliar with travelers who

have CPAP machines. Also, some airlines allow passengers to use their CPAP in flight, but some do not. Be sure to check with your carrier if you need to use during your flight. Lastly, remember to always carry on your CPAP machine. Your CPAP in a carrying case does not count towards your carry on bag total since it is medical equipment. There is also much less of a chance that your CPAP machine will be lost or damaged.

Traveling to Higher Altitudes

Whether in an airplane or at the top of the Swiss Alps, rest assured that most CPAP devices now automatically compensate for altitude changes. For other devices, failure to make the appropriate adjustment may result in ineffective therapy. Please call your sleep technician at United Sleep Medicine before you travel to discuss your specific CPAP regarding this altitude adjustment feature.

Truck, Car, Van or RV

Most CPAP machines have a DC connection that allows you to run it from a 12-volt battery using a standard cigarette lighter socket. If you have a DC capable machine and will be sleeping in a car, boat, RV, or truck with a standard cigarette lighter socket within about 6 feet, then you will likely need only the DC power cord that goes with your particular CPAP model. Make sure the battery in your vehicle is well charged before your trip, otherwise you may end up with a dead battery. We also recommend not going more than a couple of nights using this power method unless you will be driving around each day, allowing the alternator in your vehicle to recharge its battery.

Hotels and Motels

We often hear that some CPAP users check into their hotel or motel only to find out that there is not an available power outlet close to the bed. Therefore, we recommend that you bring an extension cord to avoid this predicament. Make certain that the extension cord you use is rated to handle the voltage of electrical current coming from the power outlet (for example: 110VAC vs. 220VAC).

Freedom in the Great Outdoors with a Battery Pack

Want to use your CPAP machine absolutely ANYWHERE? Then you will need a battery pack. These are very useful if you are going camping, or somewhere else with limited or no power available. Battery packs may also be helpful at home in the event of a power outage or emergency situation. They last typically from one to three nights before needing to be recharged from a regular AC power source. Your CPAP machine must have a DC connection to work with a battery pack.

Rest Easy

Traveling with your CPAP may seem like a hassle, but it does not need to interfere with your active lifestyle. More importantly, using your CPAP will help you get the rest you need to fully enjoy your vacation. Happy Trails!

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