



**University Hospitals Birmingham**  
NHS Foundation Trust



# Humidifier Instructions for Continuous Positive Airway Pressure CPAP

**Building healthier lives**

**UHB is a no smoking Trust**

You have been supplied with a humidifier to use with your CPAP treatment to improve symptoms of mouth and throat dryness at night.

## What is it?

A humidifier is a specifically designed plastic unit which usually clips on to the side or front of your machine. It holds water which is heated by the unit and supplied via a tube to your CPAP mask. This helps with the mouth and throat dryness. You may also be supplied with a heated tube for use with the humidifier depending on the severity of your mouth and throat dryness.

**Your CPAP Model \_\_\_\_\_ Heated tube Yes/No**

There are some important safety precautions to take note of when using the humidifier.

## Safety Precautions

- Use the CPAP & humidifier on a flat, stable surface next to the bed
- Use either distilled or filtered water in the humidifier. You can boil water and let it cool as an alternative. Using water direct from the tap usually results in a build-up of lime scale in the humidifier, which significantly shortens the life of the unit
- Use fresh water every day as using the same water each day increases the risk of respiratory infection
- The humidifier unit should only be connected or disconnected from the CPAP machine when the water tub is empty
- Do not use any additives (e.g. scented oils or perfumes) in the water. These may reduce the output of the humidifier and damage the water tub
- When transporting the humidifier, turn off the power, remove the water tub and empty and dry completely.
- Do not run the humidifier dry i.e. without water in the tub
- Do not use on an aircraft as turbulence may cause water to enter the CPAP unit

## Setting up the humidifier

1. Remove the side cover from the machine by pressing down the clip on the top right hand side of the device as you look at it straight on and gently pull it away from the machine
2. Fully open the water chamber using the clasp on the right hand side by the water fill lines. Fill it with water to the maximum water level. Do not use hot water
3. Close the water chamber and insert into the side of the machine itself where the side cover has been removed from. There is no other electrical unit required

## Maintenance

### Warnings

- Do not immerse the device or power cord in water
- Always unplug the device before cleaning and make sure it is dry before plugging back in
- Take care when handling the unit. The water and the water tub base may both be hot. Allow 10 minutes for the heater plate and any excess water to cool

### Daily cleaning

Wash the tub lid, plate and base in warm water using a mild detergent.

Rinse thoroughly in clean water and allow them to dry away from direct sunlight.

### Other cleaning

To remove lime scale in the water tub, use a solution of one part household vinegar to 10 parts water.

The humidifier can be washed in dishwasher on a delicate or glassware cycle on the top shelf only. Do not use a cycle where the temperature exceeds 65°C.

## Other Maintenance

Inspect the water tub and seal; stop using the unit and contact Lung Function and Sleep if any component is leaking or cracked or the seal becomes torn.

## Common problems:

### **Too much moisture in the tube/mask**

This can be caused by having the humidification setting up too high, in which case turn it down a notch at a time until problem is alleviated. Placing the unit lower than the bed height can also help. Placing the tube (non-heated) under the bed covers can also help with excess condensation.

Condensation can also be caused by a cold bedroom temperature; turning the heating up by a few degrees may help.

### **Still dry on humidification**

Turn the level up one notch at a time until adequate moisture is delivered.

### **Build-up of deposits on the heated plate**

Use the lime scale cleaning procedure detailed above.

---

## **Lung function and Sleep**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham  
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston  
Birmingham, B15 2GW  
Telephone: 0121 627 2000