

# SLEEP MASK INSTITUTE

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## PATIENT EDUCATION SERIES

### COMPLIANCE: THE MOST IMPORTANT “C” IN CPAP

*Imagine this:* a person takes the time & effort to get a drivers license, spends a lot of money on buying a new car, and then leaves it just parked in the garage.

Doesn't make a lot of sense, does it? Well, it happens with a lot of new CPAP patients. In fact, on average, only about 50% of people “comply” by regularly & correctly using their CPAP.

This 50% rate is not surprising given that most patients don't get enough initial training or ongoing support. But research shows that patients who get good support through “CPAP chronic care” have compliance rates of 88-95%. That means you can double your chances of success from 50% to 95%!

#### Why Does Compliance Matter?

Leaving your car parked in the garage may be a waste of money, there's no risk to your health. But if you “park” your CPAP in the closet or don't use the CPAP on a daily basis, then you are putting yourself at great risk:

- Increased chance of heart attack and stroke
- Higher risk of hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Increased risk of diabetes
- Brain-related issues including depression and memory loss
- Increased likelihood of obesity (which can make your apnea even worse!)

#### How Can You Get Help on Compliance?

CPAP chronic care involves a couple of different things:

- Education – stay up-to-date on the risks of apnea & benefits of CPAP
- Monitoring & Motivation – have someone be your “coach” to stay on track
- Trouble-Shooting – have an expert who can help you with problems big or small (which result in people using their CPAP less and less over time)

Relying on friends & family is better than nothing, but it's better to find other resources that you can lean on for the long haul. Here are some examples:

- Self-help groups that meet monthly or quarterly – like AWAKE
- Wellness programs (paid for by employers) focused on sleep or apnea
- DMEs that provide coaching & chronic care with the CPAP equipment