



While all PAP machines are designed to allow for a small amount of leak for CO2 exhalation (also known as “intentional leak”), having an excessive or high leak can affect the amount of pressure the machine delivers to you and therefore can compromise your therapy. Having a mask leak can also cause the air to blow into your eyes causing them to become dry and irritated, or the mask may make noise by whistling or hissing making it more difficult for you to sleep. Follow these steps to troubleshoot your Mask Leak at home.

### 1. Poor Fit

- a. If your mask is not fitting properly a mask leak can occur. An ill-fitting mask can create a gap between the cushion and your face resulting in air escaping through the broken seal. If the mask headgear is too loose or too tight your mask will also not fit properly, compromising its seal and ultimately resulting in leaks.
  - i. **The Fix:** Check the fit and seal of your mask.
    - a. Ensure that you are using the correct cushion size for your mask.
      - i. A cushion that is too big or too small will not seal properly and will cause a high leak. At the bottom of each of our mask pages you will find the sizing guide for that particular mask (for the AirFit N20 mask, for example, you can find it [HERE](#) )
    - b. Consider switching to a different mask (in the same style) that fits your face structure better than your current one. This may provide a more comfortable and secure seal.
    - c. Ensure you are wearing your mask properly before going to sleep each night.
      - i. Practice in front of a mirror or refer to our Mask Fitting videos for assistance. (For the AirFit N20 mask, for example, you can find it [HERE](#) )
      - ii. Use the “Run Mask Fit” feature on your unit (if available) to test the fit of your mask before you lay down to sleep.

### 2. How old is your mask?

- a. All PAP manufactures have guidelines as to the lifespan of their products and how frequently they should be replaced. Overtime with use, PAP masks will become less effective as the headgear stretches out and the cushions start to deteriorate.
  - i. Always refer to the manufacturer’s replacement frequency guidelines and consider replacing your mask if needed. ([PAP MASKS](#))

### 3. How often do you clean your mask?

- a. Over time, dirt and oil from your skin will build up on your PAP mask. If your mask is not cleaned regularly the dirt and oil will begin to degrade the mask cushion resulting in a poor seal, especially as the air pressure from your PAP machine increases throughout the night.
  - i. Ensure to follow the manufacturer's guidelines for the cleaning frequency and recommended methods/products for your PAP mask and accessories. Some general cleaning guidelines for all your PAP equipment can be found [HERE](#). Find cleaning solutions [HERE](#).

### 4. Sleeping position

- a. Are you a restless sleeper who moves around or tosses and turns throughout the night? If yes, you could displace your mask while moving around.
  - i. **The Fix:** Consider switching to a different mask. Some masks are better suited for use in different sleeping positions than others. By switching to a different mask in the same style you may find a mask that stays in place better as you move around in your sleep. ([PAP MASKS](#))

### 5. High PAP pressure requirements

- a. Requiring a high PAP pressure can increase the chances of experiencing unintentional leakage from your mask.
  - i. **The Fix:** Consider using the ramp function, if available, on your PAP machine. This function will gradually raise the pressure as you start to fall asleep, resulting in the decreased likelihood of discomfort with your pressure ([Pressure Discomfort Troubleshooting](#)) and of breaking the seal of the mask.

### 6. Mouth breathing

- a. If you sleep with your mouth open but do not use a mask that covers both your nose AND mouth, your leakage will increase as the air enters your nose and rushes out of your mouth.
  - i. **The Fix:** If you are using a Nasal or Nasal Pillows mask, consider switching your mask to a Full Face style ([Full Face Masks](#)) Alternatively, use a Chin Strap with your Nasal Pillows or Nasal mask to help keep your mouth closed while sleeping ([Chin Straps](#))

After following these troubleshooting steps are you still experiencing mask leak? Try booking a video consult [Here](#) with one of our Support Specialists for further assistance.

