



The Ultimate Guide to Traveling with CPAP

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Welcome to the Lofta Ultimate Guide to Traveling with CPAP. Those of us with sleep apnea and chronic snoring know there is **no such thing as a night off from CPAP** use. The risks of untreated sleep apnea combined with the necessity of wakeful vitality make traveling without CPAP an impossibility. Thankfully the advent of travel/potable CPAP devices have made it easier than ever to take therapy on the road. This guide answers many of the **important questions** about **traveling with CPAP** so you never miss a night of therapy.



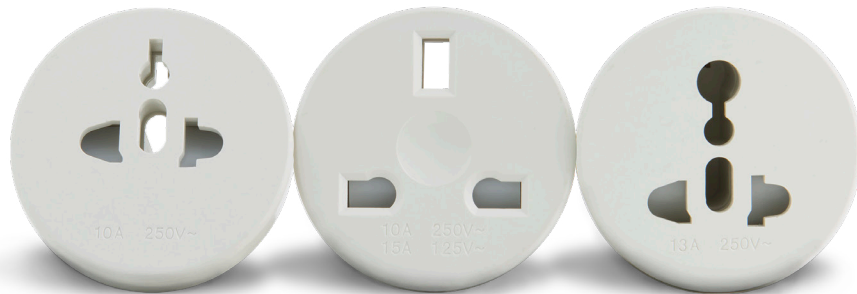
When traveling should I pack my CPAP device in my checked baggage?

We always suggest keeping your CPAP device with you as a carry on versus packing the device in your checked baggage. The risk of the device being damaged or not having access to your device should your checked baggage become lost or misdirected can be mitigated by keeping your device with you at all times.



Will my CPAP device or the bag in which I place the device be exempt from carry-on baggage limitations and related costs for carry-on baggage?

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a CPAP machine is not considered carry-on luggage and does not count toward your carry-on quota. You are allowed a carry-on bag, a personal bag such as a purse or briefcase, and your CPAP machine in its traveling case. A medical equipment tag, identifying your machine as a necessary medical device, will help avoid any concerns about your carry-on items should you be asked by a TSA agent or flight attendant about the extra bag.



Will my CPAP power supply work internationally or do I need special converters and adaptors?

Most CPAP power supplies have built in converters which means they are “plug and play” in most countries and will function on both 110 and 220/240 volts. You will, however, need to have simple electrical adaptors (not a converter) to ensure the plug style matches up with the countries you will be visiting. When traveling to Africa you will need a grounded adapter plug type M, or D. In some cases, the AC power supply does not contain the converter but rather the converter exists inside the CPAP device itself. Check with Lofta if you are unsure of the power configuration of your device.

How can I determine if my CPAP Power Supply has a built-in converter so I know for sure if I can avoid having to bring a separate converter with me?

You will need to check the electrical input specifications which usually appear on the label of the CPAP device itself or the AC power supply. Here is what you should be looking for:

- Input: ~100-240V 50/60Hz 65W - if you see something like this on your CPAP, your device is compatible with multiple voltages. In this case, you will only need the grounded adapter plug.
- Input: 115/230V 50/60Hz 200W - it means that your CPAP device can be switched between 110-120 volts in North America and Canada, and 220-240 volts in all other countries including those in Africa.
- Input: 120V 60Hz 2.8A - it means that your CPAP device is only compatible with a single voltage, in this case, 120 volts. If you use your CPAP device in other countries without the voltage converter or transformer, you will damage your CPAP device and it is more than likely it will become inoperable.

When I am traveling it is inconvenient to carry or buy distilled water. What are my options?

Never use tap water in your CPAP device. Using purified bottled water should be fine but keep in mind you may need to demineralize the humidifier tank with vinegar occasionally, but this practice is safe and much easier than carrying distilled water with you.





Are there any supplies I should consider carrying with me when traveling?

We suggest thinking ahead before leaving on an extended vacation. It may be prudent to bring a 15' extension cord in case your accommodations do not have an electrical outlet near your bedside. Spare filters, mask cushions and other expendable supplies are good to have on hand. While having a copy of your prescription is not required it is a good idea to always have access to your prescription just in case you require a replacement CPAP device or supplies that require a prescription to be dispensed to you.

Should I consider the altitude of the destination I a traveling to?

It is a good idea to take into account any significant altitude changes that might exist between where your device was configured to be used and where you are traveling to. The pressure required for efficacious therapy may vary if you travel to a vastly different altitude. In these cases, your device may need to be adjusted prior to your travel. The good news is that most new CPAP devices have auto titration and if the upper pressure setting is set high enough the device should automatically compensate for the increased pressure that may be required at higher altitudes.





What should I know about navigating airport security, TSA and carrying my CPAP device onto commercial airplanes?

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a CPAP machine is not considered carry-on luggage and does not count toward your carry-on quota. A medical equipment tag, identifying your CPAP machine as a necessary medical device, will help avoid any concerns about your carry-on items should you be questioned by a TSA agent or flight attendant. You will be required to remove the machine from its case, though you can leave its tubing and breathing mask inside the case. The X-ray machine must be able to see through the CPAP device; if it cannot, additional scanning methods may be used. In order to protect the hygiene of your CPAP machine, TSA recommends that you place it inside a clear plastic bag before entering the security checkpoint. Should your machine need to be inspected by an agent, request that the agent put on clean, sterile gloves before handling it. Also ask that any surfaces the machine will be placed on be thoroughly wiped down and that any explosive detection swabs used are new in order to avoid contaminating your device with bacteria a used swab may have on it.

Do I need to bring any special paperwork with me when I am navigating airport security and carrying my CPAP device aboard commercial aircraft?

While not a TSA rule, it is recommended for easier passage through security that you provide documents from your doctor demonstrating that the machine is yours. Bring a note of medical necessity from your doctor explaining the medical reasons why you need the machine. Additionally, bring the prescription from your doctor for the machine. These documents can be particularly helpful when boarding international flights and can help you replace the machine should anything happen to it while traveling.



What do I need to know about using my CPAP device aboard commercial aircraft?

You are generally allowed to use a CPAP aboard a plane since it is a medical device. In some cases, using a CPAP in flight will require additional research on particular airline policies. Please note that some airlines may require advance notice. If you do not have a portable CPAP with a battery setup, you will need to discuss the power options available and seating requirements of the airplane. A copy of your doctor's prescription and a copy of the Federal Aviation Administration approval letter for in-flight use of your make and model CPAP may be needed. FAA letters are available through the CPAP manufacturers' websites. Typically, you will need to be seated in first class or business class to have access to a power outlet. Some aircrafts require an EmPower Adaptor in order to plug devices into the outlets, so you may want to have one of these adaptors handy. Keep in mind that many aircraft electrical outlets can be very loose causing your CPAP machine power supply to fall out of the outlet under its own weight. To prevent this from occurring it is a good idea to buy a short electrical cord (12"-24") and plug the extension cord in to the outlet and your CPAP power supply into the extension cord. If you are not seated with access to an electrical plug many of the new travel CPAP devices now have battery options that will deliver up to 16 hours of continual CPAP therapy. These batteries are most often lithium ion and must always be carried in a carry-on versus being packed in your checked baggage. It is a good idea to check with the specific airline that you will be flying on to see if they have any special policies regarding CPAP batteries.

What if a member of the flight crew refuses to allow me to use my CPAP device aboard the airplane?

A member of the flight crew on a USA airline cannot refuse to let you use your CPAP machine or make it difficult to do so. You can file a complaint with the Department of Transportation if you experience such problems. The e-mail address is airconsumer@ost.dot.gov. The mailing address is: Aviation Consumer Protection Division U.S. Department of Transportation Room 4107, C-75 Washington, DC 20590.



How can I check specific airline policies regarding CPAP usage aboard flights?

You may want to check your airline's policy regarding CPAP usage in flight. Some airlines require a minimum of 48 hours' prior notice of your intended use onboard so that they can verify that your device meets FAA standards and regulations. Many airlines require that your machine is properly labeled indicating that it meets FAA safety regulations and is approved for use on an aircraft. For FAA regulations concerning CPAP use and some individual airlines policies reference the handy the links below:

FAA	https://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/ped/faq/
Alaska Airlines	https://www.alaskaair.com/content/travel-info/accessible-services/specialservices-oxygen#ventilator
American Airlines	https://www.aa.com/i18n/travelInformation/baggage/carryOnAllowance.jsp&anchorEvent=false
Delta Airlines	https://www.delta.com/content/www/en_US/traveling-with-us/special-travel-needs/disabilities.html
Jet Blue	http://help.jetblue.com/SRVS/CGI-BIN/webisapi.dll?New,Kb=askBlue,case=obj%28631%29#s7
United Airlines	https://www.united.com/ual/en/us/fly/travel/special-needs/disabilities/customer-ventilators.html
British Air	https://www.britishairways.com/en-us/information/travel-assistance/medical-conditions-and-pregnancy
Virgin	https://www.virginatlantic.com/us/en/travel-information/special-flight-requirements/flying-with-medication-and-equipment.html
Air France	https://www.airfrance.fr/FR/en/common/faq/during-your-flight/what-medical-equipment-is-allowed-in-the-cabin.htm



Where can I download and print an FAA approved travel letter for my ResMed or Respironics CPAP device?

Resmed Travel
Compliance Letter

https://www.resmed.com/us/dam/documents/articles/travel-compliance-letter_amer_eng.pdf

Respironics Travel
Compliance Letter

<https://www.philips.fr/c-dam/corporate/sleep-apnea/master/living-with-sleep-apnea/dreamstation-faa-letter.pdf>



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