



Maintain Your Respiratory Equipment for Best Results

Respiratory equipment is frequently a key component of the management of respiratory illness. Oxygen concentrators, nebulizer compressors, CPAP devices, and other equipment is commonly used in treating heart and lung problems. With every piece of equipment, it is very important to service, clean, and maintain it properly to achieve the optimal results. Always follow the guidelines provided to you when you received the equipment to ensure proper operation.

Service

Most pieces of respiratory equipment should be serviced regularly to ensure that they are working correctly. This includes having the operation of the equipment tested. For example, an oxygen concentrator must be tested with special equipment to ensure that it is delivering an adequate amount of oxygen. It is possible for the device to be running and appear to be working correctly and still not be delivering adequate oxygen. The only way to know for sure is to test it periodically. Other devices such as CPAP devices, Bi-level PAP devices, ventilators, and nebulizers should also be checked according to the manufacturer's suggested maintenance schedule.



This equipment may also require regular preventative maintenance to keep the device in good working order. Preventative maintenance may include the replacement of internal filters or other internal parts and should only be performed by a qualified service technician.

If your equipment is being rented, the provider should service and maintain the equipment as part of the rental agreement. If you (or your insurance provider) purchase the equipment, a service agreement should be obtained in conjunction with the purchase that states how the equipment will be serviced and who is responsible for the cost of ongoing service. Equipment should never be purchased without first reaching an agreement on ongoing service.

The patient and their caregivers may also be responsible for some of the routine maintenance of the equipment. This most commonly includes cleaning external filters, using the equipment in an acceptable environment, and general cleaning of the equipment.

Cleaning

Proper cleaning of equipment is essential for safe and effective operation of the equipment. Below are some of the reasons you should regularly clean your equipment:

1. Equipment containing moisture is always a potential area for germs (bacteria, viruses, etc.) to grow. This risk is increased when we breathe or cough into the equipment as germs can be introduced. Regular disinfection of nebulizers, humidifiers, tubing, masks, and other equipment reduces the risk of contamination that could lead to infections.
2. Normal cleaning also keeps the equipment functioning correctly. During normal use, nebulizers, humidifiers, and other equipment may become clogged with salt or other sediments preventing proper function. Failure to clean filters on compressors, concentrators, and CPAP units may cause them wear out faster and malfunction. Cleaning helps keep everything in good working order.

Disposables



Even with proper cleaning, some materials (masks, nebulizers) can break down with normal use, resulting in equipment that may not function properly. Other items (e.g., nasal cannulas, oxygen tubing) are difficult to disinfect and are easier (and even cheaper) to replace than to clean. Change all disposable equipment (nebs, tubing, masks) as recommended by your supplier to ensure proper operation.

When your equipment is set up, you should receive instructions on equipment servicing and cleaning, as well as replacing disposable items. You should also receive a schedule of how often a service technician will be visiting to service your equipment or how often you should take it in for service. If you are unsure of the cleaning and maintenance schedule, contact us and we'll be happy to provide you with instructions.

Proper cleaning and maintenance is a big step toward keeping your equipment functioning properly and helping yourself to ***Breathe Easy.***