

CPAP Machine Cleaning: Ozone, UV Light Products Are Not FDA Approved

Most CPAPs can be cleaned with soap and water. Follow your CPAP manufacturer's instructions.

The FDA is alerting people who use Philips Respironics ventilators, BiPAP, and CPAP machines and their health care providers that [Philips Respironics has recalled \(/medical-devices/respiratory-devices/recalled-philips-ventilators-bipap-machines-and-cpap-machines\)](/medical-devices/respiratory-devices/recalled-philips-ventilators-bipap-machines-and-cpap-machines) certain devices due to potential health risks. We have [answers to your questions \(/medical-devices/safety-communications/faqs-philips-respironics-ventilator-bipap-machine-and-cpap-machine-recalls\)](/medical-devices/safety-communications/faqs-philips-respironics-ventilator-bipap-machine-and-cpap-machine-recalls) related to this CPAP recall.

Watch This Before Using Ozone Gas or UV Light CPAP Cleaning Devices



[Español \(/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/la-limpieza-de-la-maquina-cpap-los-productos-de-ozono-y-luz-ultravioleta-no-estan-aprobados-por-la\)](/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/la-limpieza-de-la-maquina-cpap-los-productos-de-ozono-y-luz-ultravioleta-no-estan-aprobados-por-la)

If you use a CPAP machine at night to help you breathe during sleep, you know it can be difficult to keep up a regular cleaning schedule. A dirty CPAP machine contaminated with germs like viruses and bacteria can make you sick. So automated machines advertised on TV that claim to clean or disinfect your CPAP might look like a good option.

But you should think twice before buying a machine that claims to clean or disinfect a CPAP. These machines are not legally marketed for this use by the FDA in the United States. Machines are not necessary to clean your CPAP. Most CPAPs can be cleaned with mild soap and water as described in the owner's manual for your machine. Some manufacturers recommend using diluted vinegar.

What is a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine?

A CPAP is a type of ventilator that helps people who have obstructive sleep apnea, a health condition that causes brief pauses in breathing during sleep. When you have sleep apnea, your airway becomes completely or partly blocked by your tongue, tonsils, or other parts of your mouth or throat during sleep. When your airway is briefly blocked your brain and organs do not get enough oxygen, which can cause health problems. A CPAP machine keeps your airway open by providing a continuous stream of air through a mask. A long, flexible hose connects the CPAP machine to the mask so that you can move around or turn over in bed.

Why does my CPAP machine need cleaning?

Germs from your lungs, throat, or mouth can get into the CPAP mask or hose as you breathe in and out during sleep, or germs on your skin may get transferred to the CPAP mask or hose. Dust, mold, or other allergens may also get into the CPAP mask or hose.

All types of CPAP machines need to be cleaned regularly so that these germs and contaminants do not grow inside of your equipment and make you sick. Dust and dirt can also cause problems with the machine, making it more likely to break or need replacement.

How should I clean my CPAP machine?

Since each type and brand of CPAP machine is different, you should follow the cleaning schedule and instructions from the company that made your CPAP machine. All detachable CPAP parts can generally be cleaned with mild soap and water unless the owner's manual says otherwise.

The face or nose mask, and detachable hoses and connectors, can be soaked in a sink filled with soapy water and then hung up to air dry. Some manufacturers recommend cleaning detachable CPAP parts with a combination of vinegar and water. If there is visible residue on the mask or hose connectors, you can wipe it off with a soft cloth, or rinse it off with running water before soaking in the sink.

Remember not to put any machine with an electrical cord into water or other liquids. Use a damp towel to clean the outside of the part of the CPAP machine that has an electrical cord. If your CPAP machine has a humidifier, clean the water tank as instructed in the owner's manual. And don't forget to rinse reusable filters with water or get new filters on the schedule suggested by the manufacturer.

What types of machines that claim to clean CPAPs are being sold?

There are two main types of machines that claim to clean CPAPs. One type uses ozone gas, which can be dangerous and toxic above certain levels. The second type uses ultraviolet (UV) light. To date, the FDA has not approved or cleared any machine to clean a CPAP. This means the FDA has not made a judgement regarding the safety or effectiveness of these machines for this use.

Why is the FDA concerned about devices claiming to clean CPAPs?

The FDA has received reports from people who use CPAPs that they experienced unexpected asthma attacks, headaches, and breathlessness after using devices claiming to use ozone gas to clean their CPAP. Not only can ozone leak out of the CPAP equipment into your home during cleaning, but ozone levels inside of the CPAP equipment can be above safe limits even several hours after cleaning is completed.

Ozone gas and UV light machines that claim to clean CPAPs do not have FDA clearance or approval, meaning that the FDA has not found that ozone gas and UV light cleaners work to kill germs on CPAPs and are safe. The FDA has not received data or evidence from manufacturers that says UV light can clean the inside surface of CPAP hoses, or information to confirm that UV light does not damage CPAP machines. The FDA does not have evidence that machines using UV light protect you from unsafe levels of UV radiation exposure.

Are home CPAP cleaners approved by the FDA?

No home CPAP cleaning devices that use ozone gas or UV light have been approved or cleared by the FDA. The FDA has not determined whether CPAP cleaning devices are safe. The FDA does not have evidence whether CPAP cleaning devices work to clean or disinfect CPAP equipment of germs or allergens.

See this and other FDA [*CPAP safety research photos*](#)

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FDA scientists prepare to test the safety and efficacy of a CPAP cleaning device.