

# BREATHE EASY

Home ventilators keep patients healthy and out of the hospital

BY JOHN BERGGREN

**M**arsha Wright has battled chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD) for nearly eight years. The 55-year-old's diagnosis is further complicated by obesity, diabetes and a history of smoking.

"I've always had problems with colds, bronchitis and pneumonia," Wright says.

She has been hospitalized multiple times because of her health, mainly to treat high levels of carbon dioxide in her blood. But her health reached its worst in September 2009 when she was hospitalized for more than a month, of which 23 days were spent in the ICU on a ventilator. Following hospitalization for this illness, Wright spent several weeks in a nursing home in order to recover.

"A nursing home just isn't for me," Wright says. "I had to get out of there as quickly as I could."

## A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Wright was able to return home with some personal assistance and help from the staff at Salina Regional Home Medical Services. She began using



a home ventilator at night and during afternoon naps to help keep the carbon dioxide levels in her blood from escalating.

It has been a year since she began using the home ventilator, and Wright has been able to avoid hospitalization related to her breathing disorder.

"I'm a real believer in this equipment," Wright says. "I've tried a CPAP [continuous positive airway pressure] machine and simply couldn't tolerate it. This ventilator is easy to use and has allowed me to stay at home. I'll always use it from now on."

## BENEFITS OF HOME VENTILATORS

Home ventilators differ from CPAP and bilevel positive airway pressure (BiPAP) breathing machines in that they can actually maintain a patient's respiratory rate if the person's breathing stops or becomes too slow. Ventilators also have the ability to regulate pressures needed to deliver the correct amount of breath volume to the patient. They have flexibility to be used with a mask slipped on over the nose and mouth or through a tracheotomy tube in more demanding cases.

Anyone who has had multiple hospitalizations due to high carbon

Amy Commerford, RRT, respiratory therapist with Salina Regional Home Medical Services, assists Marsha Wright, Salina, with her home ventilator.



## MAKE IT A SMOOTH MOVE

Salina Regional Home Medical Services can help make your transition from hospital to home as seamless as possible with the help of our caring staff. Call **785-823-8770** for more information.

dioxide levels and advanced stages of COPD, as well as some neuromuscular disorders, should ask his or her doctor if a home ventilator would help.

### IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

“Many with obesity or those who suffer from low respiratory rates while sleeping could be helped with the use of home ventilator technology,” says Amy Commerford, RRT, respiratory therapist with Salina Regional Home Medical Services. “A sleep study isn’t needed if you have a diagnosis that causes increased levels of carbon dioxide to be in your blood. People can ask their doctor for a referral or contact us directly for more information.”

Home Medical Services has respiratory care staff on call 24/7 to support patients who use its products.

“They’ve been wonderful to work with,” Wright says. “I’ve called at 3 and 4 o’clock in the morning if I’ve thought something wasn’t right and they’ve always been right there to help me.” ☒

## GOING HOME MADE EASIER

Salina Regional Home Medical Services serves patients within a 60-mile radius of Salina and offers clinical expertise and personalized assistance that few home medical equipment suppliers can match. Services and equipment include:

### MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

- + Hospital beds and accessories
- + Low air loss mattresses
- + Phototherapy
- + Glucose monitors and supplies
- + Lift chairs
- + Bathroom safety equipment
- + Pain control devices (TENS units)
- + Canes, crutches and walkers
- + Wheelchairs
- + Portable ramps
- + Scooters

### RESPIRATORY CARE ITEMS

- + Oxygen delivery systems (gas and liquid)
- + CPAP and BiPAP equipment and supplies
- + Aerosol nebulizer machines
- + Apnea monitors
- + Home ventilators
- + Tracheotomy supplies
- + Pulse oximetry and Stardust
- + Suction machines

### INFUSION PHARMACY

- + 24/7 pharmacist consultation and support
- + On-site pharmacy
- + IV and injectable medications (including TPN, antibiotics, pain management and hydration)
- + Enteral fluids and feeding supplies
- + Pumps, poles and related supplies

Salina Regional Home Medical Services is located just inside the main entrance to the Salina Medical Arts Building, 520 S. Santa Fe.



Salina Regional Home Medical Services offers not only a wide variety of supplies but also the training and support you need to use your supplies effectively.

Staff instruct patients how to use the medical supplies.

