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Continuous positive airway pressure in COVID-19 patients with moderate-to-severe respiratory failure

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CPAP can be successfully used in a number of COVID-19 patients with hypoxaemic respiratory failure and gas exchange and radiological findings similar to those generally considered to be indications for invasive mechanical ventilation <https://bit.ly/2GpBx6a>

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To the Editor:

Noninvasive ventilation (NIV) and continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) are recommended for acute hypoxaemic respiratory failure (AHRF) due to cardiogenic pulmonary oedema but no recommendation has been made for viral pandemics, because of the lack of randomised studies showing their efficacy and concerns of infection dissemination [1]. Early after the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in Italy, there was an expert consensus in favour of CPAP and NIV as first-line treatments for the associated AHRF [2]. However, few studies used unspecified NIV in a minority of patients without detailed results [3–5]. CPAP was the object of two short reports with differing results [6, 7]. Thus, their value in COVID-19 remains to be established.