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continuous positive airway pressure, a method of [positive pressure ventilation \(def.jsp?id=100115601\)](#) used with patients who are breathing spontaneously, in which pressure in the airway is maintained above the level of atmospheric pressure throughout the respiratory cycle. The purpose is to keep the alveoli open at the end of exhalation and thus increase oxygenation and reduce the work of breathing. Cf. [positive end-expiratory p. \(def.jsp?id=100086338\)](#)

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