

Fast Facts

About Obstructive Sleep Apnea



Identification of OSA

Signs and symptoms

- Snoring, interrupted by pauses in breathing (apnea)
- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Gasping or choking during sleep
- Restless sleep
- Intellectual deterioration
- Poor judgment/concentration
- Memory loss
- Irritability
- Hypertension
- Nocturnal angina
- Depression
- Obesity
- Large neck/girth (>17" in men, >16" in women)
- Oropharyngeal crowding
- Morning headaches
- Sexual dysfunction
- Nocturia

Consequences if OSA is Left Untreated

- Hypertension
- Cardiac Arrhythmias
- Myocardial Ischemia
- Myocardial Infarction
- Stroke
- Motor vehicle and work related accidents due to sleepiness
- Decreased quality of life
- OSA patients, prior to diagnosis and treatment, consume 2-1/2 times more health care resources than patients without OSA.

What is Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)?

Obstructive Sleep Apnea is when a person stops breathing repeatedly during sleep

- Breathing stops because the airway collapses and prevents air from getting into the lungs
- Sleep patterns are disrupted, resulting in excessive sleepiness or fatigue during the day

What causes the airway to collapse during sleep?

- Extra tissue in the back of the airway such as large tonsils
- Decrease in the tone of muscles holding the airway open
- The tongue falling back and closing off the airway

How many people have Obstructive Sleep Apnea?

- 4 in 100 middle-aged men and 2 in 100 middle-aged women have Obstructive Sleep Apnea
- Most OSA sufferers remain undiagnosed and untreated
- Obstructive Sleep Apnea is as common as adult asthma

What happens if Obstructive Sleep Apnea is not treated?

Possible increased risk for:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease and heart attack
- Stroke
- Fatigue-related motor vehicle and work accidents
- Decreased quality of life

What is the treatment for Obstructive Sleep Apnea?

The most common treatment is:

- CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway

Pressure) pronounced "see-PAP". Other less common treatments include surgery and oral appliances, which may be effective in certain individuals.

- Any treatments should include weight loss if needed, exercise, and avoidance of alcohol, sedatives, and hypnotics.

How does CPAP therapy work?

CPAP treats Obstructive Sleep Apnea by providing a gentle flow of positive air pressure through a mask to splint the airway open during sleep.

- Breathing becomes regular
- Snoring stops
- Restful sleep is restored
- Quality of life is improved
- Risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, heart attack, stroke, and motor vehicle and work accidents is reduced

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