



Spokane Regional Sleep Apnea Network
www.spokanesleepapneanetwork.com

Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) is a potentially life-threatening condition affecting over 25 million Americans, over 80% of whom are still undiagnosed. It is due to a partial or full collapse of the upper airway during sleep, which prevents airflow to the lungs, leading in turn to a reduction in the amount of oxygen delivered to the brain, heart and other organs. These episodes can last from several seconds to over a minute, and can occur hundreds of times each night. The reduction in blood oxygen saturation and the increased effort required to breathe cause multiple awakenings during the night, disrupting normal sleep architecture and interfering with the body's restorative sleep cycle. As a result, patients may wake up in the morning still feeling tired and go through the day with excessive levels of sleepiness. Sleep apnea also produces physiological changes which significantly increase the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and diabetes, neurocognitive impairment and motor vehicle accidents.

Risk Factors for Sleep Apnea

Talk to your doctor if you have one or more of these signs (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive daytime sleepiness | <input type="checkbox"/> GERD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual dysfunction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choking or gasping during sleep | <input type="checkbox"/> Memory and concentration difficulties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Witnessed pauses in breathing during sleep | <input type="checkbox"/> Mood disorders, irritability, depression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nocturia | <input type="checkbox"/> A family history of sleep-disordered breathing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morning headaches | <input type="checkbox"/> Mouth breathing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bruxism (tooth grinding) | <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal obstruction, allergies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High Blood Pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> A large, scalloped tongue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes | <input type="checkbox"/> Large tonsils/adenoids |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BMI over 35 | <input type="checkbox"/> A low, draping soft palate or large uvula |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neck circumference > over 17" (males) or >16" (females) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hypothyroidism | |

Diagnosis

Definitive OSA diagnosis requires evaluation by a sleep physician and either an in-lab or home sleep study. This overnight test records breathing, oxygen saturation, heart rate, sleep position and other parameters which allow the sleep physician to determine the OSA presence, severity and ideal treatment for each individual case.

Treatment Options

There are a number of approaches to the treatment of sleep apnea:

- **CPAP** (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) is the gold standard for OSA treatment, consisting of a titratable machine that blows pressurized air into the nose or mouth via a well fitting mask, "splinting" open the airway
- **Oral Appliance Therapy**, which repositions the mandible and/or tongue anteriorly during sleep, is recommended by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine for mild or moderate apnea patients who prefer it to CPAP, have failed CPAP therapy or are not candidates for it
- **Maxillomandibular advancement and other types of oral surgery** are an alternative in cases where anatomical abnormalities are responsible for a constricted airway
- **Weight loss**, including by **bariatric surgery**, has been shown to significantly reduce the severity of sleep apnea
- **Positional therapy**, in which mechanical or electronic devices encourage side sleeping, may be partially effective in cases where most of the snoring or apnea/hypopnea episodes occur while lying on one's back
- **Nasal devices** such as cones and strips, as well as **nasal medications or surgery**, may help by reducing resistance and encouraging nasal breathing

Follow Up home or in-lab sleep testing is always necessary to determine the efficacy of the treatment.

For more information, to complete a personal risk assessment questionnaire, or to find a local provider, see
www.spokanesleepapneanetwork.com

The information on this form is for educational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for the medical advice of one's personal health care provider.