

## Sleep Apnea

### What is Sleep Apnea?

- A condition marked by abnormal breathing during sleep with multiple extended pauses in breath reducing the quality of sleep and the body's supply of oxygen, leading to potentially serious health consequences.

### How Common Is Sleep Apnea?

- Central sleep apnea affects approximately 9% of adults over the age of 40.
- More frequent in men than in women.

### What Is Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)?

When the airway at the back of the throat becomes physically blocked causing temporary lapses in breath.

#### Symptoms connected to obstructive sleep apnea (OSA):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Snoring- Loud involving gasping, choking, or snorting causing to briefly wake</li><li>• Sore throat/dry mouth- Morning sore throat or dry mouth</li><li>• Nocturia- Frequent need to wake up to urinate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disrupted breathing- Respiration which becomes labored or even stops briefly</li><li>• Excessive daytime sleepiness or drowsiness</li><li>• Morning headaches</li><li>• Irritability</li><li>• Limited attention span/difficulty thinking clearly</li></ul>
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*Symptoms arise due to poor sleep and decreased oxygen levels as the result of interrupted breathing.*

#### Risk factors of blockage and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA):

Obstructive sleep apnea occurs when a person's airway becomes blocked during sleep.

#### Risk factors have been found to increase the risk of blockage and OSA:

- **Anatomical characteristics**-The size and positioning your neck, jaw, tongue, tonsils, and other tissue near the back of your throat can directly affect airflow.
- **Obesity**-Weight is the leading cause of OSA and may be an underlying risk factor in up to 60% of cases. Obesity contributes to anatomical narrowing of the airway. A 10% increase in weight can equate to a six-fold increase in OSA risk.
- **Use of sedatives**, including alcohol-Sedative medications and drugs can cause tissue in the throat to relax, making airway obstruction easier. Pain medicines like opioids can also interfere with this normal process of breathing.
- **Family history**-Having one or more close relatives with OSA are more likely to develop OSA themselves.
- **Cigarette smoking**-Smokers have OSA at a higher rate than people who don't smoke.
- **Sleeping on your back**-Makes it easier for tissue to collapse around the airway causing blockages.
- **Nasal congestion**-Breathing through the nose is reduced because of congestion are more likely to experience OSA.
- **Hormone abnormalities**-Hypothyroidism (*under-active thyroid*) and acromegaly (*excess growth hormone*) may increase the risk of OSA by causing swelling of tissue near the airway and/or contributing to a person's risk of obesity.

## Health Risks of Sleep Apnea

- Leads to sleep deprivation from frequent nightly interruptions and poor overall sleep.
- Diverse health consequences that affect a person physically, mentally, and emotionally .
- Untreated sleep apnea raises dangers for cardiovascular issues including high blood pressure, heart attack, heart disease, and stroke due to reduced oxygen levels.

## Treatments

- Work with your healthcare provider to find the root cause of your sleep apnea. Sleep apnea is difficult to treat without understanding the root cause.
- Lifestyle changes-Lose weight, reduce use of sedatives, and sleep on your side.
- CPAP machine used nightly.
- Mouth devices to move jaw forward and open airway at night.
- Monitor for other chronic diseases like hypertension, elevated cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes.