

Why Sleep Apnea Is So Serious

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What's The Big Deal?

It seems like we are seeing more and more news stories about how untreated Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) leads to higher risk for some serious health issues. This has many asking themselves, "Why is this such a big deal?" Let's take a look at what happens inside the body of a person with OSA.

During sleep, the muscles in the throat become more relaxed. In obstructive sleep apnea, the person's airway collapses, causing the sleeper to stop breathing. Arousals from sleep occur when the brain tells the body to wake up and breathe (many associate this with the snort that often follows a pause in breathing). During an apnea, the sleeper's heart rate and oxygen levels decrease. When the sleeper arouses, their heart has to beat faster to help bring the oxygen in the blood to a healthy level. Now let's consider that a person with moderate OSA will stop breathing (and thus, make their heart work harder) 20 times per hour. 20 apneas per hour times 8 hours of sleep, times 7 nights = 1120 instances *per week* where the sleeper's heart—which should be at rest—is having to beat faster to compensate for OSA. Over time, the extra work performed by the heart can lead to increased risk of heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression and more.

A Message From Dr. Whitney

By Dr Courtney Whitney, Board Certified Sleep Physician, Owner, Medical Director WSDC
The importance of treating sleep apnea.

Everyone should breathe while they sleep, right? It is surprising how many people are not able to do so. Our job is to identify those of you who need help. We specialize in helping you navigate the therapy options and monitoring these outcomes. I think you will find the journey is well worth it.

Patients with obstructive sleep apnea usually snore, most feel tired during the day, and very few are aware of their poor breathing during sleep. Studies have linked sleep apnea to many of the common ailments I saw daily in my practice as an Internal Medicine physician. Prior to 2000, if you were discovered in my clinic to have heart disease, hypertension, stroke, pulmonary hypertension, diabetes, headaches or depression, I did not even discuss sleep. Now as a Sleep Medicine specialist, my approach to helping to resolve/prevent these issues is through optimizing sleep. Our sleep medicine services, in conjunction with your primary care physician and specialists, will optimize your health, quality of life and reduce your healthcare expenses.

We can no longer discard the increased risk of health complications from untreated sleep apnea. The cascade of events that lead to compromises in your health are complex. Some are within your control and can be improved by your behavior—others are out of your control. Unfortunately, whether or not you are breathing adequately while sleeping is not only out of your control but also eludes your consciousness. It is refreshing to see physicians, communities and families giving healthy sleep the attention it deserves.

If you are concerned about your breathing while asleep let your doctors know. A sleep study at your local hospital may illuminate a serious health problem previously undetected.

Do you Think You Might Have A Sleep Disorder?

Yes No

- Do you snore?
- Are you excessively tired during the day?
- Have you been told you stop breathing during sleep?
- Do you have a history of hypertension?
- Is your neck size > 17 inches (male) or > 16 inches (female)?
- Do you wake up to use the bathroom more than twice a night?
- Have you ever fallen asleep while driving?

Answering "yes" to two (or more) of these questions may be a positive screen for Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Patient should consider talking with their healthcare provider about a referral for a sleep evaluation or sleep study at your local hospital.

We Can Help!

Discover real solutions to your sleep problems by talking with your Health Care Provider about a sleep study at

The Whitney Wire
The Quarterly Newsletter From Your Friends at Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants (WSDC)

Another Deer Camp?

If you are the only one in your hunting shack not breaking out earplugs before bedtime, you have likely been made aware of your snoring and its effect on others. While it can be annoying for others, it may be shortening your life.

Untreated sleep apnea is proven to increase a person’s chances of high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, diabetes, atrial fibrillation, and many other serious health issues. On top of that, you are probably far more tired than you need to be. If you have been told you snore and stop breathing when you sleep, tell your healthcare provider. You can be tested and treated for your sleep disorder at your local hospital. Make sure you share this newsletter with your favorite hunter!

CPAP Talk By Susan Gunwall, LPN, WSDC Clinical Coordinator and Director of Operations

Item	HPCS Code	Replacement Schedule
Full Face Mask	A7030	90 days
Full Face Cushion	A7031	30 days
Nasal Cushion	A7032	30 days
Replacement Pillow	A7033	30 days
CPAP Mask	A7034	90 days
CPAP Headgear	A7035	180 days
CPAP Chinstrap	A7036	180 days
CPAP Tubing	A7037	30 days
Disposable Filter	A7038	30 days
Filters	A7039	180 days
Oral Interface	A7044	90 days
Heated Humidifier	E0562	5 Years
CPAP Machine	E0601	5 Years

We are asked this question by patients every day! How long various CPAP supplies should last isn’t always apparent to the CPAP user. The table on the left outlines the replacement schedule as put forth by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This is a guideline only--your replacement level will vary depending on the care of your CPAP accessories and other variables. **If you have unused Flexible Spending Account dollars and use CPAP, consider updating your CPAP supplies.** For further questions or supply needs please contact one of our clinical specialists at (877) 844-6150.

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Continuous
Positive
Airway
Pressure

CPAP therapy uses pressurized air to keep the airway open during sleep. It is a non-invasive and very effective way to treat Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Sleep Fact:
It is estimated that 1 in 5 adults have Sleep Disordered Breathing. 80% are unaware and thus go untreated

About Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants

Created by Dr. Courtney Whitney of the Whitney Sleep Center in Plymouth, MN, Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants (WSDC) serves the sleep medicine needs of hospitals in less populated areas.

Hospitals that partner with WSDC, are able to offer a high quality, AASM accredited sleep medicine program to its patients right at their home town hospital. WSDC diagnoses and treats all 84 known sleep disorders. If you are a patient reading this in a waiting room—your hospital partners with WSDC.

Patients who feel they may have a sleep disorder are encouraged to talk to their healthcare provider about their symptoms. A simple one page screening form can often help determine the need for an overnight sleep study.

Partnering hospitals will soon provide CPAP clinics where CPAP users can bring their equipment to be inspected and obtain replacement CPAP accessories as needed. If you are in need of CPAP accessories, give us a call at 877-844-6150.

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