



# Sleep Disorders

## FAQ: Obstructive Sleep Apnea

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

OSA afflicts 20 million adult men and women in the U.S. People who have OSA stop breathing repeatedly during sleep because the airway collapses. Airway collapse may be due to such factors as a large tongue, extra tissue in the airway, or decreased muscle tone holding the airway open. As a result, air is prevented from getting into the lungs. These pauses in breathing can happen 30 times or more per hour. When healthy sleep is interrupted in this way, it puts a strain on the heart and can lead to a number of serious health conditions.

### How do I know if I have OSA?

OSA can occur in men, women and children of all ages and sizes. Most people who have OSA do not realize they suffer from the condition. Often, it is someone else who witnesses the first signs of OSA.

If you or someone you know snores regularly and has one or more of the following symptoms, it may be OSA and you should consult with your doctor. Key signs and symptoms include:

- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Loud or disruptive snoring
- Gasping or choking during sleep
- Grogginess and morning headaches
- Frequent urination at night
- Depression and irritability
- Obesity
- Large neck or crowding of the upper airway
- Post-menopausal women

### What happens if I have OSA and I don't treat it properly?

People who do not seek diagnosis and effective treatment for OSA can be at risk for:

- High blood pressure
- Irregular heart rhythms or heart disease
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Increased likelihood of driving or work-related accidents

### How is OSA diagnosed?

Discuss sleep complaints and symptoms with your doctor. An overnight diagnostic sleep study, known as a split-night polysomnogram, or split-night PSG, is used to determine the type and severity of the sleep disorder, as well as appropriate treatment. Occasionally, patients may need to return for a second night in order to allow more time to fully assess treatment. Other indications for a sleep disorders exam include:

- Snoring
- Loss of Energy
- Hypertension
- Anxiety/Depression
- Difficulty Sleeping
- Observed Apnea
- Sleep Paralysis
- Ischemic Heart Disease
- Obesity
- Palpitations
- Forgetfulness
- Frequent Napping
- Daytime Somnolence
- Morning Headaches
- History of Stroke
- Trouble Concentrating
- Failing Asleep while Driving
- Restless Sleep
- Insomnia