

Sleep Apnea and Why It's Keeping You From Getting a Good Night's Sleep

For many people, sleep is one of the first things to go when their schedule becomes overwhelming. But that starts a damaging cycle where too little sleep leads to sleep conditions, weight gain, and heart disease, among other issues. One of these issues is sleep apnea, a condition where the sleeper stops breathing or only takes shallow breaths while asleep. Someone who wakes up between 5 to 15 times an hour has a mild case of sleep apnea, and someone with severe sleep apnea wakes up more than 30 times.

Sleep apnea can cause serious health problems, but as many as 90% of people with it don't even know they have it. So what is sleep apnea? How do you detect it? Most importantly, how do you treat it?

The What

There are two types of sleep apnea.

The most common type is known as obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), and it happens when something blocks airflow while you sleep. The archetypal OSA candidate is overweight, male, drinks, and smokes. Enlarged tonsils or tongue, sinus problems, gastroesophageal reflux, and allergies are other OSA risk factors.

Central sleep apnea (CSA) is much less common and affects less than 1% of people. CSA occurs because the brain stops sending the body signals to breathe while sleeping. It's more likely to occur in men over 65 who are already suffering from heart problems.

It is possible to suffer from both types of sleep apnea at the same time. Both types increase the likelihood of stroke, diabetes, heart disease, falling asleep while driving, and obesity. In addition, people with sleep apnea already have high blood pressure.

How Do You Know You've Got It?

Signs of sleep apnea can include snoring, gasping noises, grinding teeth, brain fog, sleepiness, impotence, depression, and high blood pressure. Dry mouth or drooling may be another sign of sleep apnea, as conditions that cause mouth breathing like sinus infections, colds, or deviated septums also block the airway.

Many of the symptoms of sleep apnea are also treated conditions in their own right, like depression or impotence. This can lead to professionals suggesting treatment for other things before considering sleep apnea. Often family or friends are more likely to notice the snoring or gasping episodes, and a diagnosis usually occurs after a sleep study.

Treatments

For sleep apnea treatment, we can divide them into two different types: medical interventions and lifestyle changes.

Sleep Apnea and Medical Interventions

Surgery is the most invasive of the three options, and frequently performed surgeries include tonsillectomies (to create more space in the throat), rhinoplasties (fixing deviated septums), and maxillomandibular advancement (moving the upper and lower jaw forward).

For most moderate or serious cases, the most common treatment option is a continuous positive airway pressure device (CPAP)

or automatic positive airway pressure (APAP) device. These are usually a plastic facial mask attached to a tube and a device that reinforces the airway with pressurized air. While the positive airway pressure treatment methods have been shown to reduce many of the health risks that come with sleep apnea, it's also uncomfortable and can cause dry mouth, chest discomfort, and nosebleeds. The CPAP device may keep the airway open during sleep, but most people stop using it due to the discomfort. Studies are finding that positive airway pressure therapy doesn't notably reduce the cardiovascular risk associated with sleep apnea.

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Sleep Apnea and Lifestyle Changes

When treating sleep apnea through lifestyle changes, many of the usual suspects apply. Sleep on your side. Stop smoking. Quit drinking. Lose weight.

These are all excellent ideas. It's important to eliminate inflammation. Soft tissue like the tonsils, tongue, or airway relaxes when you're asleep. If it becomes inflamed, swollen, or enlarged, it can obstruct the airway.

To deal with inflammation, stop eating processed foods and refined sugars as they trigger the body's immune response. Make sure to get some sunshine and stay on top of your B vitamin levels, as vitamin D and B deficiencies can also cause inflammation. Easily obtained anti-inflammatory foods include turmeric, ginger, blueberries, chia seeds, broccoli, and red peppers among others.

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Another factoring in managing sleep apnea involves clearing out the sinus passages. The buildup of mucus makes it difficult to breathe clearly during the day and results in

shallow, fitful sleep at night. If you're seeing other symptoms of sleep apnea, it's time to clear out the sinuses. Gargle with apple cider vinegar or a fire cider. Avoid dairy, sugar, processed foods, and other foods likely to cause phlegm and mucus. Hot and cold hydrotherapy can also help things drain out the sinuses.

Many of the steps that deal with inflammation, sinus infections, and sleep apnea in a sustainable way overlap. Everything in the body is connected. Eating a healthy diet that's 80% fresh, raw organic veggies without processed food will result in less inflammation, better quality sleep, and make it easier to clear out the sinus passages. A diet bereft of vegetables and dependent on processed foods guarantees that any health issues will continue and eventually worsen.

The Importance of Sleep

Inadequate quality sleep is a factor in developing a multitude of health issues, from heart disease to Alzheimer's to weight gain. Sleep apnea is a stealthy thief, as people suffering from it often don't realize they're waking themselves up. If you find yourself waking up in the morning feeling as though you haven't slept at all, you owe it to yourself to find out if it could be serious and reclaim a good night's rest.

Related Reading:

- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*
- *How to Detoxify and Heal the Lymphatic System*
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- *Candida, Gut Flora, Allergies, and Disease*
- *How to Cure Lyme Disease and Virtually Any Other Bacterial Infection, Naturally*

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- *The Real Reason You Grind Your Teeth – Ask a Dentist*
- *10 Surprising Signs of Sleep Apnea – verywell.com*
- *Positive airway pressure doesn't reduce heart risk with sleep apnea – Reuters*
- *What Causes Chronic Inflammation, and How To Stop It For Good – Organic Lifestyle Magazine*