Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome

Common sleep disorder causes high blood pressure and heart attacks
What Is Sleep Apnea?

Latest statistics show that 50% of the adult male population snores, of whom 20% suffer from sleep apnea. In the female post-menopausal population, this prevalence is the same. Sleep apnea is characterised by frequent pauses of breathing during sleep. Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is caused by blocked airflow during sleep from narrowing and closure of the upper airway. Central sleep apnea (CSA) is another form of sleep apnea characterised by airflow cessation due to the brain not signaling the breathing muscles to work. It is important to note how tired you feel and whether your signs and symptoms affect your daily routine. Untreated sleep apnea could lead to high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks and strokes.

Signs And Symptoms Of Sleep Apnea

- Snoring
- Chronic tiredness or sleepiness at work
- Poor concentration or memory impairment
- Morning headaches
- Irritability
- Poor quality sleep
- No energy
- High blood pressure

Medical Consequences Of Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is a serious, potentially life-threatening condition that is far more common than is generally understood. Quality and duration of sleep affect both our performance and physical wellbeing. OSA can affect quality of life negatively by impairing alertness and altering mood and memory. It can also result in workplace and motor vehicle accidents. OSA may also increase the risk of developing long term health risks such as:

- High blood pressure (Hypertension)
- Heart attacks
- Stroke
- Obesity
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Increases risk for glucose intolerance and insulin resistance
Treatment Of Sleep Apnea

- Treatment include Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) or Bi-Level Positive Airway Pressure (BiPAP), weight management and careful attention to other risk factors such as diabetes, high cholesterol and smoking.
- Oral devices may improve or alleviate mild cases of OSA and snoring. The oral appliance is a device that pulls the lower jaw forward and holds it in position so that the soft throat tissues do not collapse into the airway, causing snoring and sleep apnea.
- In selected cases, surgical intervention may be considered.

How To Detect And Diagnose Sleep Apnea

- A screening questionnaire done by a healthcare practitioner will give an accurate indication of the probability of sleep apnea by asking questions about your sleep schedule and habits.
- A comprehensive home or hospital-based sleep study test will identify sleep apnea. With the sleep study test, sensors are placed onto your body to record your sleeping pattern. These sensors measure various parameters of what happens to your body during sleep.
- A home-based sleep study will accurately qualify and quantify obstructive sleep apnea, but will not always identify other sleep disorders or medical conditions.

Steps To Get Tested For Sleep Apnea

Step 1: Obtain a referral from your healthcare practitioner.

Step 2: Please fax or e-mail the referral. Medical aid authorisation is obtained for the night of the sleep study. If you cannot make the appointment, please notify our office at least 24 hours before the time of the study.

Step 3: A qualified technician will meet you at our rooms or hospital to explain the process and to set up the equipment.

Step 4: Please return the equipment the following morning. If you are in hospital, the technician will collect the equipment. The data will be downloaded and verified.

Step 5: MySleep maintains a prestigious network of sleep clinicians and physicians to review and interpret the test data received.

Step 6: Immediately after the analysis has been completed, the final report will be e-mailed or faxed to your healthcare practitioner.

Step 7: Based on the report, your healthcare practitioner can then decide on the recommended treatment.
How To Prepare For The Sleep Study

On the day of the study, avoid caffeine after 12pm and try not to nap. Try to avoid or minimise your alcohol intake on the day of the study. It is important for the technician to know what medication you are taking, even non-prescribed medication. Do not discontinue any prescribed medication unless advised by your healthcare practitioner.

On The Night Of The Study

A qualified technician will meet you at our rooms, hospital or a suitable location to successfully complete the procedure. You should wear comfortable clothes that you can go to bed with.

Set up can take between 40 to 60 minutes. You will be required to complete a sleep and medical history questionnaire. After all the paperwork has been completed, set up will begin. Sensors are placed on your body to record various parameters during sleep. You can go to bed at your normal bedtime, staying in bed between 6 to 10 hours.

Please note: The equipment used is very specialised and expensive, so please handle with the utmost care.

Collection Of The Equipment

The technician conducting the procedure will schedule a suitable time with you to return the equipment the next morning. If you are in hospital, the equipment will be collected. The data will be downloaded and sent to a sleep specialist within our network of physicians or to a physician recommended by your referring healthcare practitioner.

Interpreting The Study And Results

MySleep maintains a prestigious network of sleep clinicians and physicians to review and interpret the test data received. Immediately after the interpretation has been completed, the report will be sent to your referring healthcare practitioner.

Consult with your healthcare practitioner on diagnosis and treatment options.

Key features of MySleep:

1. Home-based sleep studies.
2. Quick access and results.
3. Continuous feedback tailored to the specific requirements of the physician.
4. Complete CPAP, BiPAP, Mask supplies and installation services.
5. Patient compliance is monitored over an extended period, after having gone onto treatment.
6. A complete healthy lifestyle solution, specifically designed to improve your overall health.
Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) Treatment

The treatment of choice for obstructive sleep apnea is a continuous positive airway pressure device (CPAP). CPAP is fitted with a mask that gently blows air into the airway to help keep it open during sleep. This method of treatment is highly effective. Using the CPAP as recommended by your healthcare practitioner is very important. The majority of people who use CPAP find immediate symptom relief and are delighted with their increased energy and mental sharpness during the day.

Message: Heart Failure is also related to obstructive sleep apnea, independent of traditional risk factors. A full 40% of Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) patients have been found to have obstructive sleep apnea. If left untreated, sleep apnea increases the risk of heart complications by 5 fold. During a sleep apnea event, not only is there a drop in oxygen levels and an increase in blood pressure, it also releases a number of inflammatory agents; these agents are considered to greatly increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Reference: PloS Medicine 2009; 6: e1000132

Different Types Of CPAP Machines

- **Constant CPAP**: A CPAP machine is designed to deliver a constant pressure throughout the night.

- **Auto CPAP**: An Auto-CPAP (APAP) machine will automatically adjust the pressure as needed, which tends to reduce the average pressure delivered throughout the night and therefore sometimes results in a higher level of patient compliance.

- **BiPAP**: A Bilevel or BiPAP machine is designed to deliver two pressures - an inhalation pressure and an exhalation pressure. BiPAP is usually recommended for patients with high pressures or patients that suffer from central sleep apnea (CSA).
Mandibular Advancement Devices

Mandibular devices, or more commonly known as oral appliances are also a treatment option for OSA and snoring. The oral appliance pulls the lower jaw forward and holds it in position so that the soft throat tissues do not collapse into the airway, causing sleep apnea and snoring.

Mask And Accessories

At MySleep we understand that the most important obstacle for a good night sleep is comfort. We have various masks available that comes in a variety of styles and sizes, so that the most comfortable mask can be selected. A good and comfortable mask fit is essential to ensure effective therapy.
Enjoy a healthy lifestyle

Managing your Lifestyle is vital for a fun filled, happy and productive life. Not living a healthy and balanced lifestyle can cause many physical and mental health problems.

The Healthy Lifestyle Programme is designed to help you live a balanced lifestyle.

A qualified healthy lifestyle consultant will help you to identify danger areas in your life and assist you to set specific SMART goals focused on improving your overall health.

You will be able to monitor your progress with a fitness and sleep tracker that can track your overall progress.

*NOTE: The fitness and sleep tracker is not included in the programme cost and can be purchased separately from MyLifeCare.*

A unique solution to the problem!

The Healthy Lifestyle Programme is one of a kind. Designed by Healthcare Professionals, this programme addresses the most important components of a balanced lifestyle:

- Understanding Sleep
- Resilience
- Exercise
- Stress Management
- Eating Habits
- Building Relationships
For more information contact MySleep at:

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Disclaimer: This brochure is for education purposes only and is intended to answer some of the frequently encountered questions about the meaning of ‘Sleep Apnea’. If you have any questions regarding the information contained in this brochure please contact your physician.