

AM I AT RISK FOR OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA?



QUICK FACTS:

Untreated obstructive sleep apnea increases your risk of having many other health problems. Certain physical features can put you at risk for sleep apnea. Common symptoms of sleep apnea are warning signs that you should discuss with your doctor. Effectively treating sleep apnea can improve your health.

HEALTH PROBLEMS:

Health problems that can be related to sleep apnea include:

- High blood pressure
- Coronary artery disease
- Congestive heart failure
- Type 2 diabetes
- Erectile dysfunction
- Depression
- Stroke
- Irregular heartbeat (atrial fibrillation or A-fib)
- Heart attack (myocardial infarction)
- Heartburn (gastroesophageal reflux disease - GERD)
- Blood clots in the legs (deep vein thrombosis)
- Blood clots in the lungs (pulmonary embolus)
- High blood pressure in the lungs (pulmonary hypertension)
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Jaw pain (temporomandibular joint pain or TMJ disorders)
- Clenching or grinding the teeth (bruxism)

PHYSICAL FEATURES:

Physical features that increase your risk for sleep apnea include:

- Excess body weight
 - » Body mass index (BMI) of 25+ (overweight)
 - » BMI of 30+ (obese)
- Large neck size
 - » More than 17 inches for men
 - » More than 16 inches for women
- Recessed jaw
- Large tongue or tonsils

WARNING SIGNS:

The following symptoms are common warning signs for sleep apnea:

- Loud or frequent snoring
- Silent pauses in breathing
- Choking or gasping sounds
- Daytime sleepiness or fatigue
- Insomnia
- Non-refreshing sleep
- Morning headaches
- Memory loss
- Irritability

WARNING SIGNS IN CHILDREN:

Signs and symptoms of sleep apnea in children include:

- Snoring
- Silent pauses in breathing
- Mouth breathing
- Restless sleep
- Bedwetting
- Grinding the teeth (bruxism)
- Nightmares or night terrors
- Weight gain
- Symptoms that may be mistaken as ADHD
 - » Hyperactivity
 - » Short attention span
 - » Difficulty concentrating
 - » Behavioral problems
 - » Poor school performance

TIPS:

Talk to a doctor about your risk for sleep apnea. Your doctor may schedule you for a sleep study at an accredited sleep center. A home sleep apnea test is another option for some people who have a high risk of sleep apnea. Collecting data while you sleep will help enable your doctor to detect sleep apnea.

Effective treatments for sleep apnea are available. These include CPAP therapy and oral appliance therapy. Your doctor will help you select the best treatment option for you. Effectively treating sleep apnea can improve your sleep and quality of life. Treatment for sleep apnea also can help improve your overall health.

→ Next Steps:

- Ask your bed partner if you snore or stop breathing while asleep.
- Talk to your doctor about any obstructive sleep apnea symptoms.
- Exercise regularly and try to maintain a healthy weight.
- Your doctor may schedule you for a sleep study if you have symptoms of sleep apnea.

Questions For Your Physician



Take a few minutes to write your questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.

Sample Questions:



Why do I feel tired all the time?

Why do I wake up so early in the morning?