

Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) occurs when a person's breathing slows down or stops temporarily during sleep, even though their body is still trying to breathe. Symptoms of OSA can range from mild to severe and can lower the amount of oxygen in the blood.

OSA Symptoms

- Feeling very sleepy during the day
- Trouble focusing
- Headaches
- Waking up with dry mouth
- Snoring
- Gasping during sleep

Patients at greater risk are: people who are overweight or obese (BMI of 25 and above), post-menopausal women, middle-aged and older men, ethnic minorities, smokers, people with endocrine disorders, men and women with larger neck sizes (17 inches or more for men, 16 inches or more for women), etc.

Side Effects

- Oxygen levels rising and falling during sleep
- Increased heart rate
- Increased risk of stroke
- High daytime blood pressures
- Problems with how the body uses sugar and insulin
- Difficulty thinking clearly
- Mood changes

Treatments

- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)
 - This is standard treatment for OSA
 - CPAP provides pressurized air through a face mask worn while sleeping
 - The airflow keeps the airway open, preventing pauses in breathing
- Oral appliances
 - Mouth guards
 - Help maintain an open and clear airway
- Lifestyle changes
 - Weight loss provides many benefits to those with OSA
- Surgery
 - Potential option for those who have trialed CPAP or oral appliances and were unsuccessful