



WHAT IS OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA (OSA)?

People with sleep apnea either stop breathing (for 10 seconds or more) and/or do not breathe deep enough during sleep. This can happen many times an hour. Sleep apnea is considered mild to severe depending on the number of times this happens.

WHAT CAUSES OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA?

Blocked or narrowed airways in your nose, mouth, or throat can cause sleep apnea. Your airway can be blocked when your throat muscles and tongue relax during sleep.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The main symptoms of sleep apnea are:

- Feeling tired in the morning.
- Waking up with a headache
- Being so sleepy during the day that you fall asleep while working or driving.

Your bed partner may notice that while you sleep:

- You often snore loudly.
- You gasp or choke.
- You stop breathing

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE IT?

- We will ask you a few questions before your surgery. We will measure your height, weight and neck size.
- The answers to the questions will determine if you are "At Risk" for sleep apnea. If you are "At Risk," we will set up a sleep study. We will watch you closely after surgery. Patients with sleep apnea or patients who are "At Risk" often have problems with breathing, especially when taking pain medicines.

SHOULD I WORRY ABOUT SLEEP APNEA?

If you have sleep apnea, you may not be sleeping as well as you could. You may have serious problems such as:

- High blood pressure
- Heart failure
- Diabetes
- Problems with memory and concentration
- Depression
- Daytime sleepiness, which can lead to accidents (like falling asleep while driving).

HOW IS IT TREATED?

You may be able to treat mild sleep apnea by making changes in how you live and the way you sleep. For example:

- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Sleep on your side and not your back.
- Avoid alcohol and medicines such as sleep medicine before bed.

If you have **moderate to severe** sleep apnea, you may be able to use a machine that helps you breathe while you sleep. This treatment is called continuous positive airway, or CPAP.

Let us know if you have any questions or concerns. For more information see:

<http://yoursleep.aasmnet.org/>