

health awareness



CTSI

A COUNTY HEALTH POOL PUBLICATION

JUNE 2021



SLEEP APNEA

Sleep apnea is a sleep disorder that causes abnormal breathing while a person is sleeping. Individuals with sleep apnea have multiple, sometimes hundreds of times per night, extended pauses in breathing while they sleep, causing low blood oxygen levels and poor sleep quality.

Types of Sleep Apnea

There are two types of sleep apnea: obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) and central sleep apnea (CSA). OSA, the more common of the two, is caused by a physical blockage of the airway. The blockage is usually caused when the soft tissue at the back of the throat collapses during sleep. CSA is caused when the brain fails to properly

control the muscles used for breathing during sleep leading to slow, shallow breathing. CSA can be caused by other conditions like stroke or heart failure. High altitude can also cause CSA. Some people may have both types of sleep apnea.

Symptoms of Sleep Apnea

Both OSA and CSA have common symptoms. These include excessive daytime sleepiness, disrupted breathing, irritability, morning headaches, limited attention span or cloudy thinking, frequent need to wake up to urinate, waking up with a sore throat or dry mouth. The most common symptom of OSA is snoring; however, not everyone who snores has OSA. With sleep apnea, most people

aren't even aware they're having breathing problems or waking up. Only in the clinical setting are researchers able to see these disruptions in breathing and the accompanying disruptions in sleeping patterns.

Risk and Effects of Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea can affect anyone at any age, even children. However, risk factors for sleep apnea include:

- Male gender
- Being overweight
- Being over the age of forty
- Having a large neck size (17 inches or greater in

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men and 16 inches or greater in women) • Having larger tonsils

- Having a family history of sleep apnea

If left untreated, sleep apnea can result in a growing number of health problems, including hypertension, stroke, heart failure, irregular heartbeats, and heart attacks.

In addition, untreated sleep apnea may be responsible for poor performance in everyday activities, such as at work and school, motor vehicle crashes, and academic underachievement in children and adolescents.

Treatment

Both types of sleep apnea are

treatable; however, treatment varies depending on the cause. CSA can be treated with bilevel positive airway pressure, adaptive servo-ventilation, or oxygen supplementation. CSA can also be treated with medications or by treating the underlying condition.

Positive Airway Pressure (PAP) therapy, also referred to as CPAP, can be used for OSA. This treatment involves wearing a mask at night which is connected to a small machine which blows pressurized air into the mask. The person breathes in and out normally, but the pressurized air they breathe works as a pneumatic splint to hold the airway open so they can breathe properly.

Many types of surgical proce-

dures can help alleviate OSA. Most are geared towards removing or repositioning tissues in the airway to open the airway as much as possible, therefore helping to prevent occlusion.

An oral appliances, a device that resembles a bite guard but acts to reposition the lower jaw forward, can help to open up the airway. Some devices also work to keep the tongue from occluding the airway.

Sleep apnea is a severe condition, but once detected, it is treatable. [ctsi](http://www.ctsi.org)

Benefits Corner

CHP Covers Chiropractor Visits, Acupuncture and More

The County Health Pool (CHP) offers both in-network and out-of-network coverage for chiropractor and acupuncture visits. CHP covers 30 chiropractor visits per calendar year and 30 acupuncture visits per calendar year with either in or out of network providers. Co-pays and deductibles vary depending on the specific plan in which you are enrolled. Per your specific plan, an 80/20 co-insurance applies.

Speech therapy and occupational therapy are also covered benefits in your CHP plan. They are covered for either in or out-of-network providers with an 80/20 co-insurance depending on your specific plan. Covered visits for each are limited to 30 per calendar year.

Visit www.ctsi.org to view your plan documents and statement of benefits.

As always, CTSI staff is here to assist you with your health, dental, vision, or life insurance coverage. You can reach us at 303 861 0507.

