

Sleep Apnea: Signs Symptoms Solutions

Sleep Apnea is a condition that prevents airflow to the lungs during sleep. There are multiple reasons one may have such a condition. Age and Obesity are two but not the only reasons, muscle tone, jaw shape and size and even alcohol consumption will influence sleep and breathing. We observe this in adults and sometimes children. Apnea raises the risk of heart attack and or stroke.

Signs you may have Sleep Apnea

Small lower jaw or narrow arches with crowded teeth.

Baggy eyes in the morning.

Gastric Reflux or High Blood Pressure

Ringing in the ears.

Daytime Sleepiness or forgetful fogginess.

Waking multiple times a night. Waking up during the night to urinate.

(Which would mean oxygen is low and the heart rate is abnormally high)

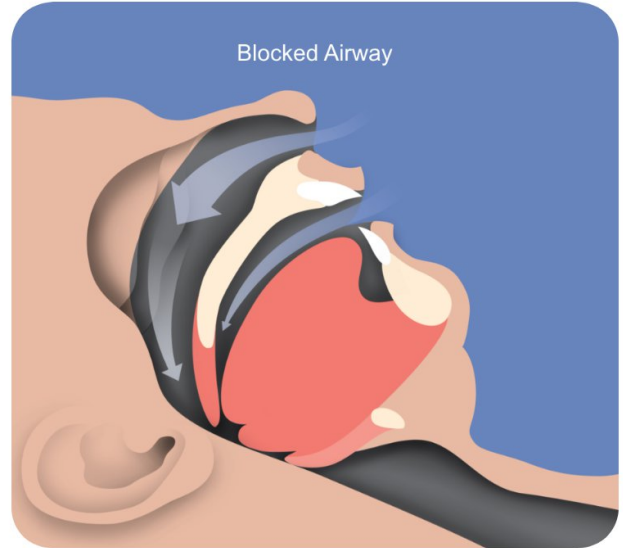
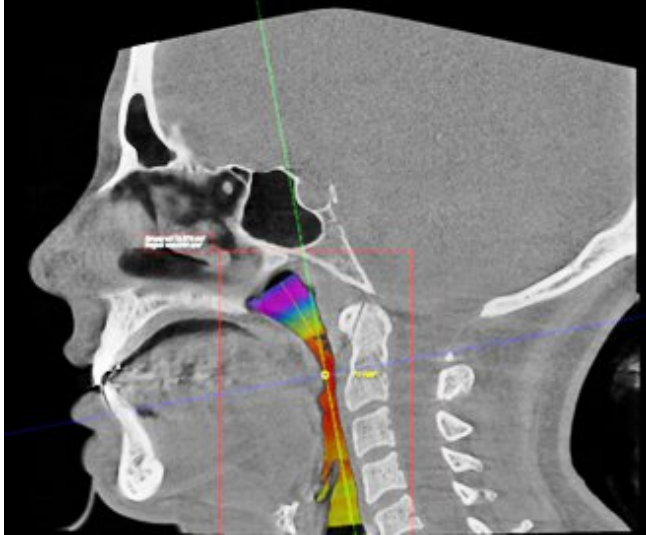
Waking up with a headache or jaw pain.



What is Happening

The tongue is an important part of this system. The airway width may be reduced if the arches are too small or narrow, if fat deposits shrink the airway or possibly the adenoids / tonsils obstruct the airspace. The tongue can in a sense obstruct. When we fall asleep the skeletal muscles of the body move into a relaxed near paralyzed state called Atonia. Especially while sleeping on the back the tongue may fall back into the pharynx causing a blockage to airflow. **Blood oxygen falls, heart rate increases wakeful cycles increase and in turn rest**

decreases. Usually we wake up when the blood oxygen falls but as the body grows accustomed to lower oxygen heart attack and strokes can occur



What are the Solutions

Opening the airway is the goal of effective sleep apnea treatment. That may mean wearing a CPAP machine. A CPAP monitors breathing and oxygen and if it falls or air doesn't flow a CPAP pushes air through the blockage. Some people tolerate this therapy well and it is the medical industry's primary treatment for sleep apnea. Some people cannot wear such a device as it does strap to the head and require sleeping in confined positions. If the patient does not wear the device they remain untreated and the risk of catastrophic events increase again.



Another solution for Mild and Moderate Apnea patients is to wear an appliance that holds the bottom jaw gently forward. This allows the tongue to move out of the airway and retain patency during atonic sleep.



Diagnosis is Key

To determine which treatment options will be effective first a proper diagnosis must be made. The Itamar company has been providing in patient hospital tests for many years. In recent years we have moved away from overnight hospital stays where people do not sleep in a normal fashion but that moved into disposable single use home tests. A cell phone app will connect your test to a sleep physician who reads, diagnoses and helps us decide which appliance will be correct for you.

To see an animated informational this specific product video is very helpful.

https://youtu.be/nxPN_VOENxM?si=c0otAr6b_XY44QSK

