

Lifestyle Sleep Apnea

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Sharing a room with someone who snores loudly can be problematic for light sleepers or for those who have a hard time going to sleep. However, there's actually more than just noise-related concerns in such situations, as loud snoring could actually be an indicator for health problems like sleep apnea. So, what is sleep apnea and what're the health risks associated with it? Read on and find out.

The Freeman Lifestyle

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OSA and CSA Symptoms and Complications

The symptoms of OSA and CSA cases tend to overlap, and this often makes it difficult for healthcare experts to determine the specifics and particulars of a sleep apnea case.

Generally, the symptoms of the two sleep apnea types include loud snoring, gasping for air during sleep, waking up with "dry mouth", difficulty sleeping (insomnia), excessive daytime sleepiness (hypersomnia), difficulty focusing/paying attention while awake and irritability.

Both OSA and CSA have been tied with complications that take shape in daytime fatigue (which manifests in having difficulty concentrating and/or being quick-tempered, moody or depressed) and cardiovascular problems (which are caused by sudden drops in blood oxygen levels while asleep).

OSA conditions have been found to hold ties with complications like high blood pressure (which can be caused by sudden drops in blood oxygen levels while asleep), increased risk in developing Type 2 diabetes (which can be caused by the condition's increased risk of developing insulin resistance), liver problems (which can be caused by the condition's effect on liver functions) and different types of metabolic syndromes.

Treatments and Therapies

While a specific cure for sleep apnea has not yet been found, there are several therapies and methods that're used to address the condition.

The use of a continuous positive airway pressure device or CPAP device is widely cited to be the most reliable way of treating the condition, but many have expressed concerns that these tend to be cumbersome and uncomfortable to use.

Basically, a CPAP device is a machine that delivers air pressure through a mask that's worn while one is asleep. The air pressure it produces provides the upper airway of its wearer with air, which keeps the air passages open and prevents snoring.

However, various studies have found that minor sleep apnea conditions have been addressed by implementing lifestyle changes without having to depend on a CPAP device(s). These changes include losing weight, feigning from consuming alcohol and tapering away from sleeping pills. A change in sleeping position(s) is also noted to have resolved certain sleep apnea cases, without the use of specialized pillows or mattresses.

Studies have also found that smokers who have sleep apnea have lessened the severity of their conditions by quitting (smoking can increase the swelling in the body's upper airway, which makes snoring and the condition worse). Those with nasal allergies and sleep apnea have also had success in better controlling the condition in seeking proper treatment(s) for their allergies.



Probable Causes and Risk Factors

There are various risk factors and causes associated with both OSA and CSA. Factors that increase the risk of OSA include excess weight (caused by fat deposits around the upper airways), family history and age-related causes, smoking and the consumption of alcohol, sedatives or tranquilizers.

The roster of risk factors for CSA include age, heart disorders and use of opioid medications like methadone. Various studies have found that men are two to three times more likely to have either obstructive or central sleep apnea than women, and that it affects older people more than younger individuals.



Sleep Apnea

Defined as a sleeping disorder that causes frequent pauses in breathing during sleep, loud snorers – or "heavy snorers" – could be at risk of developing a wide gamut of ailments due to the abnormal sleeping patterns that're associated with sleep apnea.

Basically, it is a type of condition wherein one stops breathing for a bit while asleep, and it has been identified in three types that're based on the cause(s) of breathing disruptions: obstructive sleep apnea or OSA, central sleep apnea or CSA and complex sleep apnea or treatment-emergent central sleep apnea.

Obstructive Sleep Apnea – An obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) condition manifests in instances of breathing pauses which last longer than ten seconds each time while one is asleep. The pauses are often associated with snoring, and are caused by the narrowing of the body's upper airways due to the snoring process.

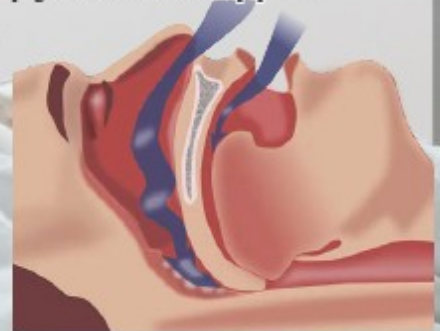
The pauses lead to a lower-than-normal introduction of oxygen into the blood, which coerces the heart to work double time to compensate. This could lead to problems in the body all in all, considering that the heart is doing more work while the body isn't exactly active. OSA is noted by healthcare experts to be the most common type of sleep apnea.

Central Sleep Apnea – Barmarked by healthcare experts as the not-so-common type of sleep apnea, central sleep apnea (CSA) occurs when the brain fails to send proper signals to the muscles that control and regulate breathing.

This means that those who have CSA unconsciously fail to make an effort to breathe for short periods while asleep, which could lead to "waking bursts" wherein one wakes with shortness of breath.

Complex Sleep Apnea – Also known as treatment-emergent central sleep apnea, this type of sleep apnea has been noted to be an obstructive sleep apnea case that has morphed into a central sleep apnea case after or while undergoing therapies for obstructive sleep apnea.

Basically, it is a complication of the condition that stems from therapies that're incompatible to the status/progression of an obstructive sleep apnea case.



SLEEP APNEA

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