

SLEEP WELL, INC. SLEEP APNEA FACTS AND TERMINOLOGY

Sleep Apnea is characterized by brief interruptions of breathing during sleep.

Apnea is a Greek word meaning “without breath.” An apnea is cessation of breath that lasts at least ten seconds.

“**Hypopnea**” also comes from Greek: “hypo” meaning beneath or less than normal and “pnea” meaning “Breath”. An Hypopnea is not a complete cessation of breath, but is reduced airflow that leads to sleep disruptions or to a decrease in the oxygen level in the bloodstream.

The apnea-hypopnea index (AHI) refers to the total number of apneas and hypopneas divided by the total sleep time in a patient’s sleep study. The AHI gives one measure of the severity of the sleep apnea.

There are **THREE** types of **APNEA**: **Obstructive**, **Central**, and **Mixed** (a combination of obstructive and central). Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is the most common.

Typically, the soft tissue in the back of the throat collapses, limiting or stopping the flow of air, resulting in sleep apnea.

Sleep apnea affects males and females of all ages, and body weights.

Symptoms of sleep apnea are loud snoring and excessive daytime sleepiness.

Untreated sleep apnea can be life threatening, consequences may include high blood pressure, stroke and other cardio-vascular complications.

More than twelve million Americans suffer from sleep apnea, and an estimated ten million remain undiagnosed.

RISK FACTORS

Family history increases risk two to four times

Being overweight as well as a large neck circumference

Sleep apnea more likely to occur in men

Abnormal structure of the upper airways contribute to sleep apnea

Sleep apnea more common among African-Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Mexicans

Smoking and alcohol increase risk of sleep apnea

TREATMENTS FOR SLEEP APNEA

Most appropriate treatment depends on the individual’s medical history and severity of the disorder

Lifestyle changes such as weight loss, exercise, avoiding alcohol and sedatives

Surgical options to clear sinus and airway obstructions

Oral appliances prescribed in consultation with a dentist

Nasal CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) is the most common treatment acting as an air splint in the upper airway, maintaining an open airway during sleep