

What is sleep apnea? And why should I look for it?

Sleep apnea is a serious but common and treatable disorder that causes a person to stop breathing during sleep. In severe cases, breathing stops several hundred times per night.

How does this affect my patients?

The majority of people who have sleep apnea don't know it. The reason sleep apnea goes unrecognized so often is simply that it happens when people are asleep. Unfortunately, without treatment, sleep apnea increases risk of or worsens major health problems, including:

- ◆ Heart failure
- ◆ Heart attack
- ◆ Stroke
- ◆ Diabetes
- ◆ Depression

What are the common symptoms to look for?

- ◆ Loud snoring
- ◆ Pauses in breathing or gasping for breath during sleep
- ◆ Waking often to use the bathroom
- ◆ Insomnia
- ◆ Nightmares
- ◆ Unrefreshing sleep
- ◆ Daytime sleepiness or fatigue
- ◆ Morning headaches
- ◆ Moodiness and irritability
- ◆ Decreased sexual desire or difficulty maintaining an erection
- ◆ Forgetfulness and difficulty concentrating
- ◆ Drowsy driving

Help your patients lower major health risks and enjoy the benefits of uninterrupted, healthy sleep by recognizing the signs and addressing sleep apnea.

Use these resources to integrate sleep apnea care into your practice.



Screening



Diagnosis



Treatment



Referral