

## Treatments

### Physical and Mechanical Treatments

#### Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)

This treatment involves wearing a mask that supplies a steady stream of air through the nose during sleep. The mask helps prevent airway restriction or collapse, and brings an end to the snoring, gasping, and interrupted sleep.

#### Dental Appliances

These appliances are used to open your airways by bringing your lower jaw or tongue forward during sleep.

#### Surgery

Surgical procedures are used to increase the size of your airway by removing tissue.

#### Oxygen

A narrow tube runs from an oxygen source to your nose.

*Losing weight, sleeping on your side, and eliminating the use of alcohol and tobacco can improve OSA.*



An Affiliate of  UnityPoint Health

#### Guthrie County Hospital Sleep Study Program

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**(641) 332-3802**

[www.guthriecountyhospital.org](http://www.guthriecountyhospital.org)



**(605) 362-6201**

The Guthrie County Hospital Sleep Study Program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC).

For more information on ACHC's complaint process, please contact ACHC's Complaints Department at (855) 937-2242.

# OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA

## STOP THE SNORING!



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## Dear somniTech Staff:

Even with earplugs, I can't stand my husband's snoring. I spend half the night jabbing him with my elbow so he'll roll over. Sometimes I think he even stops breathing for a little while. I've asked him to see his doctor, but he doesn't believe he has a problem. Can you help me?

## Answer:

Some people stay awake almost all night because of their spouse's loud snoring and pauses in breathing. Because they are asleep, snorers themselves don't realize they have a problem. Many of our patients come to us solely because their spouses have urged them. You are correct in urging your husband to seek medical attention. Snoring may be a sign of sleep apnea—a serious medical condition.

**"Apnea"** means cessation of breathing.

When a person has sleep apnea, the airway becomes blocked repeatedly during the night and breathing temporarily ceases.

Sleep apnea is associated with health problems such as:

- High blood pressure
- Heartbeat irregularities
- Heart attack
- Stroke

The sleepiness itself is dangerous; accidents often occur when people with untreated apnea doze off while driving or operating heavy equipment. Snoring and sleep apnea rarely go away on their own. However, they can be successfully treated.

If you would like additional information, please feel free to give us a call at **605.362.6201**.

## Signs and Symptoms of Sleep Apnea (OSA):

**Loud Snoring**—The person may alternate between snoring very loudly and being very quiet. Periods of silence may be followed by gasps or snorting sounds.

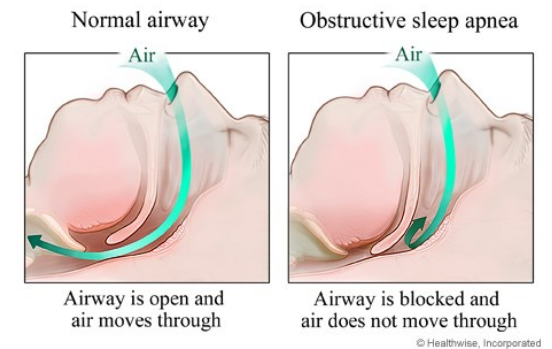
- **Observed pauses in breathing**—The sleeping partner may notice that the sufferer has temporarily stopped breathing.
- **Excessive sleepiness**—He or she may fall asleep while watching TV, reading, attending meetings, or driving. The person may wake up tired, even after a full night's sleep.
- **Morning headaches.**
- **Trouble concentrating or forgetfulness**—This can impact relationships as well as performance at work.
- **Frequent nighttime awakenings** and urination.
- **Irritability, short temper,** lack of energy, depression, or other mood changes.
- **Restlessness at night**—The sufferer may toss and turn or thrash about the bed.
- **Dry mouth.**



[www.somnitech.com](http://www.somnitech.com)

## What causes snoring and Sleep Apnea?

Simply put, a snore is the sound of an obstructed airway. Obstructive sleep apnea is defined when the sufferer's airway has enough obstruction to cause pauses in breathing. These pauses in breathing can cause blood oxygen levels to drop, sleep to be interrupted, changes in heart rate, and other physiological disturbances during sleep.



Other factors include:

- A smaller-than-normal jaw
- A large tongue
- Enlarged tonsils
- Tissues that partially block the entrance to the breathing passage

Sleep apnea often occurs in overweight people. Excess tissue in the throat affects the size of the breathing passage, thereby obstructing airflow.

Information from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.