

Frequently Asked Questions



Q- What is Sleep Apnea?

A- Sleep Apnea, sometimes known as the "silent killer" although there is usually nothing silent about it. It is associated with periodic loud snoring followed by silent pauses of 10 seconds or more. The pauses usually end in a loud snore as the airway opens and the body is replenished with oxygen. The longer the pauses, the more dangerous the condition. The pauses are a sign of a collapsed airway. Since the airway is collapsed, the body can no longer receive the oxygen it needs which may lead to oxygen deprivation to the heart, lungs and brain. It may also lead to spiking systemic and pulmonary blood pressures and eventually a stroke or sudden heart failure during the night.

Q- What are the treatment options for Sleep Apnea?

A- People with light moderate to severe cases of sleep apnea usually are limited to CPAP or surgery. Patients with less than light moderate severity may benefit from surgery, dental devices, and weight loss.

Q- What are the consequences of untreated sleep apnea?

A- Only a physician can answer specific questions concerning your personal health. According to the most recent research available, sleep apnea may lead to a significantly increased risk for heart failure, stroke, high blood pressure, impotence and irregular heartbeats. Sleep apnea may also make it more difficult to control diabetes and hypertension.



Questions you may have regarding your sleep study

Q- Will it hurt?

A- No, there are no needles used in the entire process.

Q- What happens if I need to get up during the night?

A- If need be you may be disconnected from the recording equipment.

Q- Will I be able to sleep with the sensors in place?

A- Yes, it generally takes no more than thirty minutes to become accustomed to the equipment. The vast majority of the patients at the Sleep Center have little difficulty sleeping in the lab.



Q- What should I bring with me?

A- You should bring your normal bedtime attire. If you would like to shower in the morning, please bring your own toiletries. For our women patients, pajamas are preferred instead of nightgowns.

Q- Do I take my regular medication on the day of the test?

A- Please be sure to advise the Sleep Center personnel before your study of all medications you are prescribed.

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The Evaluation Process

An evaluation at the Sleep Disorders Center begins with an initial consultation with the director of the Center. In many instances, one visit is sufficient for a diagnosis to be made and a treatment plan formulated. For some patients, however, more extensive testing is required. If an all-night sleep study is required, it is performed at our Center.

The all-night sleep study is a safe and completely painless technique by which physiological functions in sleep are measured. Patients spend one or more nights in a private and comfortable room during which a series of measurements are taken with sophisticated monitoring devices. Patients arrive at our center in the evening and leave the following morning; it is usually not necessary to miss a day of work.

In the course of your night at the sleep Center, over 1000 pages of data are collected, along with a complete video tape record. This data is thoroughly reviewed by our expert staff and when necessary, by additional consultants. A detailed final report is usually ready within one week.

Billing Information

Current fee information can be obtained from the Sleep Center of Kentuckiana. The procedures required in your evaluation and, therefore, the total cost, will vary. Insurance generally covers a significant portion of the fee, but coverage varies among policies. We advise that you contact your insurance carrier to determine the extent of reimbursement. Our policy is to request payment at the time of consultation or testing. If you require special financial arrangements, we will make every effort to accommodate you.

Multiple Sleep Latency Test

What is a Multiple Sleep Latency Test?

Your physician may request that you have a daytime multiple sleep latency test, which is often done following an overnight sleep study. The test is painless and takes about seven hours to complete. It is not a treatment but a single test that contributes to your total medical evaluation. After the request is received from your physician, you will be scheduled to come to the sleep disorders laboratory. The multiple sleep latency test will record your brain waves or EEG, heart rate or EKG, muscle activity and eye movements. These signals are recorded on a graph which is then reviewed by our Medical Director.

How do I prepare for the test?

On the day of your test, you should not drink coffee, tea, or any cola or other beverage that contains caffeine. You may eat breakfast. It will be necessary to shampoo your hair before the test, because your hair and scalp should be clean and free of oil and hair spray.

What can I expect during the test?

When you go for your test, the technologist may give you a questionnaire to be completed and then will begin applying the electrodes. These are small metal discs that are applied with tape or a liquid, dried with a stream of air to the scalp, around the eyes, under the chin, and on the shoulders. After the test, these discs will be removed with another liquid. After the electrodes are applied, the technologist will ask you to lie down in a bed that is in a private room. Before the recording begins, the technologist will make several requests. You may be asked to look only with your eyes to the left, or look to the right, or swallow. When these are completed, the technologist will turn out the light and go into another room.

You will be monitored for about 20 minutes every two hours. The technologist will then ask you to stay up until the next nap time. Between sleep times, you are free to read, write letters, watch television, or have a visitor. Our Medical Director will interpret the recording and inform the requesting physician of the results of your test.

12 Tips for CPAP

1. Begin using your CPAP for short periods of time during the day while you watch TV or read.
2. Use the "ramp" setting on your unit so the air pressure increases slowly to the proper level.
3. Use CPAP every night and for every nap. Using it less often reduces the health benefits and makes it harder for your body to get used to it.
4. Newer CPAP models are virtually silent; however, if you find the sound of your CPAP machine to be bothersome, place the unit under your bed to dampen the sound.
5. Make small adjustments to your mask, tubing, straps and headgear until you get the right fit.
6. Use a saline nasal spray to ease mild nasal congestion.
7. Take a nasal decongestant to relieve more severe nasal or sinus congestion.
8. Use a heated humidifier that fits your CPAP model to enhance your breathing comfort
9. Try a system that uses nasal pillows if traditional masks give you problems.
10. Clean your mask, tubing and headgear once a week.
11. Regularly check and replace the filters for your CPAP unit and humidifier.
12. Work closely with your sleep doctor and your CPAP supplier to make sure that you have the machine, mask and air pressure setting that works best for you

10 Keys to CPAP Success

CPAP is the most effective treatment for obstructive sleep apnea. The successful use of CPAP will help you breathe easier, sleep better and live healthier. Using CPAP can be a positive experience if you keep these key points in mind:

1. **Commitment:** CPAP is not a quick fix for your problem. It involves a long-term commitment to improve your sleep and your health.
2. **Communication:** Stay in close communication with both your sleep doctor and your CPAP supplier. Ask lots of questions and seek help when you need it.
3. **Consistency:** Use CPAP all night, every night and for every nap. You will receive the maximum health benefits from CPAP when you use it every time that you sleep. This will also make it easier for your body to adjust to the treatment.
4. **Correction:** The first mask you try may not be the best one for you. Work with your sleep doctor to make corrections to your equipment selection. Ask about trying a different type of mask if you have ongoing problems. Make sure that your mask is a good fit and learn to use your equipment properly.
5. **Challenge:** Tell a family member or close friend to ask you each morning if you used your CPAP the previous night. Have someone to challenge you to give it your best effort.
6. **Connection:** Your adjustment to CPAP will be easier if you are able to connect with others who use the same treatment. Ask your sleep doctor if there is a support group in your area for people who have sleep apnea, or look for one on the Internet.
7. **Comfort:** Increase your level of comfort by using a saline spray, decongestant or heated humidifier if CPAP irritates your nose, mouth or throat. Use your unit's "ramp" setting to slowly get used to the air pressure level. See if there are soft pads you can buy that will fit over your mask straps.
8. **Cleaning:** Clean your mask, tubing and headgear on a regular basis. Put this time in your schedule so that you don't forget to do it. Check and replace the filters for your CPAP unit and humidifier.
9. **Completion:** Although you are never finished with CPAP therapy, you should reward yourself by celebrating the completion of your first month of treatment. Expect this first month to be your hardest period of adjustment. It will involve some trial and error as you find the machine, mask and pressure settings that are right for you.
10. **Continuation:** After your first month of treatment, continue to make a daily commitment to use your CPAP all night, every night and for every nap.