

Always Sleepy?

Do you continually feel tired at times during the day? Do you find it difficult to concentrate or struggle to accomplish many everyday tasks? Do you feel sleepy or even find yourself falling asleep while driving or during a conversation? If so you may be one of the many people who suffer from Sleep Apnoea.

About Sleep Apnoea

Sleep Apnoea is due to the obstruction of the upper airway, caused by the throat muscles relaxing during sleep. The airway may become partially blocked or collapse completely, causing pauses or breaks in breathing, preventing air from entering the lungs and forcing the person to wake briefly to breathe before falling back to sleep again. The period of wakefulness is so brief that even though it may happen hundreds of times a night, the person usually won't remember waking up, however, sleep will have been greatly disturbed.

As a result, people with Sleep Apnoea suffer excessive sleepiness during the day, often blaming their work-load or age, but potentially leading to dangerously reduced levels of concentration, changes in mood and personality and a general reduction in quality of life.

In tests of simulated driving, Sleep Apnoea patients had worse driving performance than drivers over the alcohol limit.

Key Facts

- Sleep Apnoea has been reported to affect as many as one in 25 middle-aged men and one in 50 middle-aged women in the UK.
- Only about one in four people with Sleep Apnoea have been diagnosed.
- In tests of simulated driving, Sleep Apnoea patients had worse driving performance than drivers over the alcohol limit.
- Two studies identified an 83% reduction in road traffic accidents when patients were on CPAP treatment.

Treatment

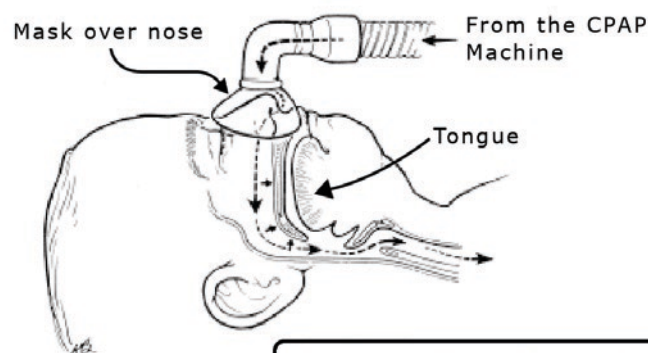
In March 2008, the Government announced that Continuous Positive Airways Pressure (CPAP) machines – the most effective treatment for Sleep Apnoea – will now be freely available on the NHS.

CPAP involves a person wearing a soft mask over the nose attached to a machine that raises and regulates the pressure of the air they breathe, preventing the airway from collapsing during sleep.

Most people who use CPAP have an immediate improvement in their sleep, and it has been clinically proven to restore daytime alertness.

Key Fact

- 80% of people who should be receiving CPAP to treat their Sleep Apnoea are either undiagnosed or have not had the treatment provided.



Arrows indicate flow of air which maintains the patency of airway behind the tongue

