



A Good Night's Sleep Is Just A Phone Call Away



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Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome (OSAS) is the most common sleep disorder evaluated and treated at Atlantic Sleep Health Diagnostic Associates. Sleep apnea is a disorder characterized by a reduction or stopping of breathing during sleep.

An apnea occurs when a person stops breathing for 10 seconds or more. Patients with OSAS complain of loud snoring, frequent awakenings, daytime sleepiness and not feeling rested in the morning. Repetitively through the night, the airway gets narrow and closes. An effort is made to take a breath, but is unsuccessful. The oxygen level in the blood stream drops. When the amount of oxygen reaching the brain decreases, the brain signals the body to wake up and take a breath. This is when the bed partner hears snoring followed by silence and then a gasp for air.

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is estimated to affect about 4% of men and 2% of women. It is probably more common than either of these numbers because the population is becoming more obese and obesity worsens obstructive sleep apnea. Unfortunately, only 20% of people with obstructive sleep apnea are currently receiving treatment. Men are more likely to have obstructive sleep apnea than women before age 50. After age 50, the risk is the same in men and women.

Obesity is a contributing factor to obstructive sleep apnea. Among obese patients, 70% have obstructive sleep apnea. Obstructive sleep apnea worsens with increasing obesity. Among cardiac patients, 30-50% have obstructive sleep

apnea, and among patients with strokes, 60% have obstructive sleep apnea. Therefore, a healthy lifestyle and diet that encourages weight loss and exercise will improve obstructive sleep apnea.

Sleep Apnea Effects Our Well Being

☀ OSA has many consequences. First, as you would expect, it disrupts sleep. Patients with disrupted sleep cannot concentrate, think, or remember as well during the day. This has been shown to cause more accidents in the work place and while driving. Thus, people with obstructive sleep apnea have a three-fold greater risk of a car accident than the general population

☀ Sleep apnea causes high blood pressure and heart problems. When the sleep apnea is treated, the high blood pressure comes down. Stopping breathing frequently during the night can cause increased stress on the heart and lead to heart failure and stroke.

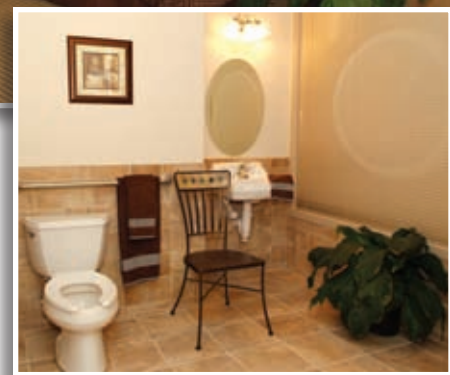
☀ Depression, personality changes and erectile dysfunction are increased in OSAS. Finally, very severe obstructive sleep apnea can even be fatal.

The Good News . . .

OSA can be evaluated and diagnosed by a sleep physician. A history, physical and diary of sleep habits are helpful. The next step is a sleep study also known as a polysomnogram. During a typical sleep study, brain waves, muscle activity, eye movements, air flow, oxygen, heart rhythm, snoring, and leg movements are monitored and recorded. Once the polysomnogram is completed, the data is analyzed by a board certified sleep specialist. A diagnosis is made and treatment is based on disease severity.

Treatment Options

Sleep Apnea can be treated with a light weight "mask" called a "continuous positive airway therapy" (CPAP) unit. Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is probably the best treatment for sleep apnea. CPAP uses air pressure to hold the tissues in the throat open during sleep. There are many different masks. Masks are much more comfortable and machines are quieter than ever. At Atlantic Sleep Health Diagnostic Associates we custom fit the masks for the individual.



Atlantic Sleep Health Diagnostic Associates offer a comfortable environment and friendly staff to ensure you have the best experience possible while being evaluated for OSA.

How To Reach Us . . .

Most of our patients are referred to Atlantic Sleep by their physician, but some come to our program on their own. In either case at Atlantic

Sleep Health Diagnostic Associates our full time clinical and technical team ensures that you receive the highest standard of care. Our studies take place in one of our 8 spacious and comfortable rooms, equipped with a flat-screen television, full size bed and private bath.

We are conveniently located in Galloway, New Jersey and open six days a week. Daytime and nighttime scheduling is available. Please call us with any questions 1-609-748-7900.

Dr Higgins is a graduate of University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Dr Higgins completed her residency in Internal Medicine at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC. Her fellowship in Pulmonology, Critical Care and Sleep Training were done at the prestigious Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia, PA.

Dr. Higgins is board certified in four specialty areas: Internal Medicine, Pulmonology, Critical Care and Sleep Disorders. She has been actively practicing sleep medicine since 1995. She and her colleagues also practice pulmonary medicine at Atlantic Pulmonary Critical Care Associates in Galloway, NJ



Meet Our Staff . . . Front row seated: Dr Nadia Sadik & Dr Frances Loftus; standing: Kayla Pulcine; back row standing (left to right): Elizabeth Gorman, Dr Sallustio Del Re, Carole Ziegler-Bush, Dr Nancy Higgins, Emelissa Martinez, Dr Saalam Alobediy, and Shana McGlone.



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