

# SHOULD YOU HAVE A SLEEP STUDY TO RULE OUT SLEEP APNEA?

1. You snore loudly, throughout the night –  
Unsure? Use the [SnoreLab app](#) to confirm.  
50% of adults snore, and half of those have sleep apnea
2. You fall asleep involuntarily during the daytime
3. Bed partner has observed apneas (periods where you hold your breath) or “snort awakenings” (brief awakenings you may not remember, when you gasp for breath)
4. You have high blood pressure: >120/80
5. Body Mass Index (BMI) > 35 ([calculate here](#))
6. Age > 50 years
7. Neck size > 17 in (16+ in for women)
8. Gender = male

If you can say yes to three of the above, please have a sleep study.  
An at-home test is easy, convenient, and inexpensive.

## ONE IN FIVE OF US LIVES WITH SLEEP APNEA

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### ADDITIONAL RISKS

The following can worsen risk of apnea (blocked airway)  
and hypopnea (partially-blocked airway)

- Genetics (family history can play a role) – consider first-degree relatives
- Congested nasal passages
- Change in the jawbone (structure or length)
- Hypothyroidism
- Enlarged adenoids or tonsils
- History of stroke
- Heart disease
- Medications can make untreated apnea worse
  - Muscle relaxants
  - Opiate pain medicines
  - First-generation antihistamines, like diphenhydramine (second-generation drugs like loratadine and cetirizine can cause insomnia)
  - Benzodiazepines (alprazolam, lorazepam, diazepam, and others)

- Sleeping pills such as zolpidem, eszopiclone, zaleplon, temazepam, and others. All drugs in the sleeper class other than the orexin antagonists suvorexant and lemborexant can make untreated sleep apnea worse
- Sedating antidepressants such as trazodone and mirtazepine
- Alcohol makes snoring and apneic episodes much worse
- You are a smoker

## **SLEEP APNEA AND WOMEN**

Sleep apnea can look different in women.  
Consider the above, and also these additional clues:

### **Night-time Clues**

- Difficulty falling asleep, waking up frequently
- Restless sleep or changes in dream patterns
- Frequent bathroom visits at night
- Night-time heartburn (gastroesophageal reflux, GERD)

### **Daytime Clues**

- Feeling depressed, anxious, irritable, or impatient
- Feeling tired or lacking energy
- Feeling sleepy or falling asleep at the wrong time or place
- Forgetfulness, fogginess, or trouble concentrating
- Accident proneness

### **And some women have no symptoms at all.**

Consider a sleep study if you experience any of the following:

- Above optimal weight
- Hypothyroidism
- A first-degree family member w/ sleep apnea
- Post-menopausal
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome

## **CLUES YOU MAY HAVE APNEA/ HYPOPNEA**

### **Nighttime clues**

- Waking up often during the night
- Waking up choking, or with a “snorting” or gasping sound
- Snoring loudly
- Frequent or loud snoring, gasping, or snorting sounds

- Difficulty falling asleep, waking up frequently
- Restless sleep or changes in dream patterns
- Frequent bathroom visits at night
- Night-time Heartburn

**Daytime clues**

- Being unusually tired during the day, or lacking energy
- Waking up from a full night's sleep feeling tired
- Waking up with a headache
- Feeling depressed, anxious, irritable, or impatient
- Feeling sleepy or falling asleep at the wrong time or place
- Forgetfulness, foggiess, or trouble concentrating
- Accident proneness