

AIRWAY DYSFUNCTION AND SLEEP-DISORDERED BREATHING IN ADULTS

Airway Dysfunction (AD) and Sleep-Disordered Breathing (SDB) is a condition where there is inadequate or improper breathing. It occurs both day and night but is usually more severe during sleep. It is often undiagnosed and as a result untreated causing irreversible damage.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *What are some of the clinical signs and symptoms of AD and SDB?*

Sleep Issues:

- Frequent nighttime awakenings
- Frequent bathroom trips
- Snoring or heavy breathing during sleep
- Difficulty in falling asleep or staying asleep
- Fatigue/day time sleepiness/ the need for excessive caffeine to stay awake
- Clenching or grinding the teeth during sleep

Clinical signs and symptoms:

- Frequent headaches
- Temporomandibular problems
- Dry mouth upon awakening/chapped lips
- Heart burn/acid reflux

2. *What are possible causes of AD and SDB?*

Facial:

- Mouth breathing/an open mouth posture
- Tongue or lip ties
- Enlarged tonsils and adenoids
- Nasal obstruction/deviated septum

General:

- Poor nutrition
- Food or environmental allergies

3. *What conditions can AD and SDB lead to?*

- Depression/anxiety
- High blood pressure, heart attack and stroke
- Weight gain
- Type II Diabetes
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

4. *How do I know if I am at risk for AD and SDB?*

The use of various screening tools which involve a combination of:

- A sleep questionnaire, sleep study or home sleep study
- Airway assessment
- High resolution pulse-oximetry (HRPO)

5. *How are AD and SDB managed?*

Non-surgical:

- Sleep hygiene: Develop a healthy sleep environment with a cool temperature
- Avoid blue light
- Avoid pets (Allergens)
- Elimination or reduction of allergen exposure if possible
- Nasal breathing therapy
- Myofunctional therapy
- Oral sleep appliance
- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)

Surgical:

- Correction of a tongue or lip tie
- Removal of the tonsils and adenoids or other ENT surgery
- Cranial Sacral or Postural surgery
- Jaw surgery

Orthodontic:

- Orthodontic treatment