Diagnosing Sleep Apnea

When you show signs of sleep apnea, such as extreme fatigue or your partner telling you that you snore often, it might be time to talk to your doctor. It is possible that have this condition and need to get treatment. The first thing to do is get a firm diagnosis, which this information is going to help you with.

**How Sleep Apnea is Diagnosed**

The first thing your doctor will ask about is the symptoms you have been experiencing. This is often the first step to figuring out if you do have sleep apnea. In addition to your symptoms, they will consider various factors, including your medical history, whether or not it runs in your family, and if you have risk factors like obesity or certain medical conditions. The doctor will then perform a physical exam and may also perform a sleep study, which is the only way to confirm sleep apnea.

**When You Should See a Doctor**

Any time you suspect that you might have sleep apnea, it is a good time to consult a doctor. Even if you think you might not have it, exhibiting multiple symptoms or risk factors for this sleep disorder is a good reason to check just to be sure. Talk to your doctor if you:

Struggle with waking up multiple times a night  
Have gasped upon waking  
Go through fatigue regardless of how much you sleep  
Have GERD or acid reflux  
Are overweight and have other risk factors

**Going Through Your Medical History**

Next your doctor is going to look at your medical history. There are many risk factors for sleep apnea that have to do with your current physical health, along with previous conditions you have might experienced. This might include being overweight, having acid reflux, or having a history of sleep difficulties. Many people don’t wake up gasping for air, but they do have a lot of insomnia and fatigue, which can also be caused by the sleep apnea.

**Tests That Might Be Performed**

There are two main types of tests that help a doctor diagnose sleep apnea, which include a physical exam and sleep studies. The physical exam is going to look at your throat, mouth, and nose to see if there are obvious signs of large tissues, enlarged tonsils, or a soft palate. Your doctor will also perform a sleep study where you are monitored while sleeping to see what your breathing does.