

I have been told I snore, should I be concerned?



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Habitual snoring can be an early warning sign of obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA), a condition in which the upper airway repeatedly narrows, collapsing inward during sleep. When the airway is obstructed, it can cause repetitive pauses in breathing (apnoea), fluctuation in circulating oxygen levels, with waking arousals which fragment sleep, denying restorative, quality overnight sleep.

Many people with OSA do not report excessive daytime sleepiness when reviewing their sleep health, completing questionnaires, yet may have clinically significant sleep-disordered breathing.

This means that for patients who are making noise in their sleep, the significant health risks associated with OSA should not be ruled out, nor ignored.

In the cases of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea, repeated upper airway obstruction can trigger:

- A drop in blood oxygen levels (intermittent hypoxia, low circulating oxygen) – Frequent surges in stress hormones, resulting in sympathetic activity (fight-or-flight)
- Sleep fragmentation, disrupting restorative sleep.
- Shortened and fragmented REM, which may impair brain function with some emotional dysregulation, along with memory concerns.

When to consider a sleep assessment :

Medical guidelines highlight OSA should be suspected not only in people who feel sleepy in the daytime (daytime somnolence) but also in those who:

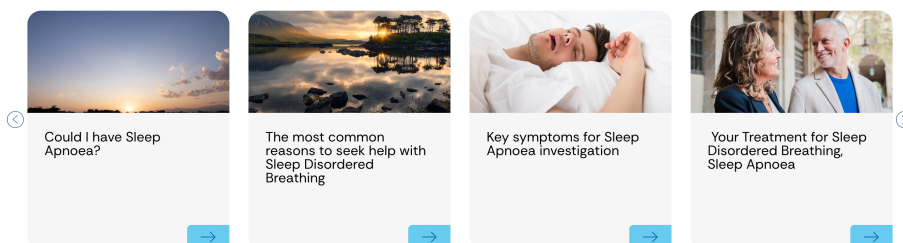
- Snore loudly
- Pause in nighttime breathing, with gasping or choking during sleep – Persistent low energy, poor concentration and unexplained changes in mood – Raised blood pressure, with some cardiac symptoms which may be sleep related, i.e. irregular heart rate (atrial fibrillation)
- Waking with morning headaches and/or dry mouth
- Unexplained sleep disruption and pattern changes often associated with peri menopause and menopause in women
- Common risk factors include neck size, weight gain and often a family history of Sleep Apnoea.

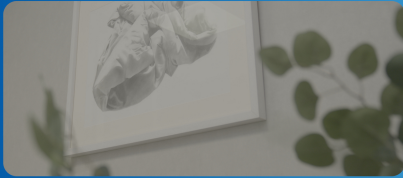
If you or someone close to you is struggling with disrupted, poor quality sleep and daytime energy loss, amongst several other associated symptoms, please complete the contact form on www.beaconSHC.ie or email info@beaconSHC.ie and we will guide you through the process of triage, assessment and treatment.

www.beaconSHC.ie

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