

Sleep disordered breathing

europeanlung.org/sleep-disordered-breathing/

The term sleep disordered breathing refers to a range of conditions that result in abnormal breathing during sleep. The most common is sleep apnoea. Apnoea means a temporary pause in breathing. Although there are other types of apnoea, the term 'sleep apnoea' usually refers to obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome (OSAS) in which the individual is briefly unable to breathe due to temporary obstruction of the airway in the throat.

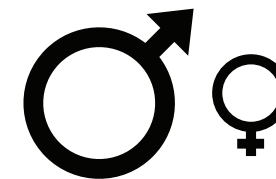


Areas for action

- There needs to be more awareness of the condition and its consequences if untreated
- National health and transport authorities need to recognise the effect of sleepiness due to OSAS on driving in order to reduce the risks to affected individuals and the wider public
- More effort is needed to simplify investigations to diagnose the condition
- Facilities for treating sleep apnoea need to be expanded, as waiting times for assessment and treatment in Europe are a serious problem
- There needs to be a better understanding of which treatments work best with different groups of people in order to improve the effectiveness of therapy



OSAS is **common, underdiagnosed** and can be **treated highly effectively** using CPAP



In developed countries, it is reported to affect between **3 and 7% of middle aged men** and **2-5% of women**



People with untreated OSAS have a **1.2-2-fold increased risk of a driving accident**



Moderate or severe obesity is found in between **60 and 90%** of people with OSAS



Pre-diagnosis, OSAS is associated with **healthcare costs** per person of between **50% and 100% more** than those for the general population



Smoking and alcohol have both been linked with a **higher prevalence** of snoring and sleep apnoea