

**Patient  
Information**

## Sleep apnoea screening

### Introduction

The aim of this leaflet is to give you some background information about the condition you are being assessed for and the processes carried out for assessment.

### About sleep apnoea

Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) is a condition where the walls of the throat relax and narrow during sleep, interrupting normal breathing. There are 2 types of breathing interruption typical of OSA:

Apnoea – where the muscles and soft tissues in the throat relax and collapse sufficiently to cause a total blockage of the airway; it is called an apnoea when the airflow is blocked for 10 seconds or more.

Hypopnoea – a partial blockage of the airway that results in an airflow reduction of more than 30% for 10 seconds or longer.

Many people with OSA experience episodes of both apnoea and hypopnoea, doctors sometimes refer to the condition as Obstructive Sleep Apnoea-Hypopnoea Syndrome (OSAHS).

The term ‘obstructive’ separates OSA from rarer forms of sleep apnoea, such as central sleep apnoea, which is caused by the brain not sending signals to the breathing muscles during sleep.

In the United Kingdom around 4 in 100 middle-aged men and 2 in 100 middle-aged women have OSA.

Although the condition can make you feel very weak it is one of the most easily treated. An overnight screening study will confirm whether you have OSA and if so, the severity of the disease.

Once the condition has been diagnosed effective treatment can begin, this will help to ease the symptoms.

### Symptoms of sleep apnoea

- Loud snoring
- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Feelings of choking or shortness of breath

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Department

Lung Function

Review due

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- Restless sleep
- Unrefreshing sleep
- Changes in personality
- Morning headache
- Partner worried by breathing pauses
- Night time sweating
- Recurrent insomnia
- Nocturnal cough
- Waking up to go to the toilet in the night

### What to expect

At your appointment for the overnight screening test you can expect the following to happen:

- Your height, weight and collar size will be recorded
- Measurements of your chest and abdomen will be taken
- You will be given an explanation of how to wear the equipment
- You will be asked to complete the Patient and Partner questionnaires and return with your equipment

### Multi-channel study

For this you will be wearing a belt around your chest and abdomen which measures the effort of breathing. You will need to wear a nasal cannula which measures airflow through your nose, and a pulse oximeter on your finger that assesses oxygen saturation and your heart rate. You may also have limb leads attached via electrodes to the legs and hip. The machine is pre-set to start and stop at specific times, however please follow your normal bedtime routine.

### Returning the equipment

Please return the equipment the following day at the time stated in your appointment letter. The equipment is issued to patients on a daily basis.

The information from the study will be downloaded and analysed by a member of staff and the results returned to the requesting consultant.

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## **Contact information**

### **Lung Function Department**

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 6819

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5:30pm

Cheltenham General Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 4313

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5:30pm

## **Further information**

Sleep Service

Website: [www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/sleepservice](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/sleepservice)

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