

Through our involvement with sleep apnea public awareness discussions, we've met various sleep apnea sufferers. After communicating the sleep health information, we have found that individual responses can be quite different. Some people appreciate and embrace the information. Others are overtaken by fear.

The panic-stricken group typically quickly identifies with many of the symptoms, such as weight gain, depression, high blood pressure, heart issues, and/or Type 2 Diabetes. They are shocked by the medical findings and reports, and in some cases, contemplate driving to a nearby emergency room! Their next thoughts revolve around life wills and funeral details. *We wish we were joking.* So, what do we say to this unnerving group?

"You're actually very lucky," is one of the first things we say. Knowing of the possibility that a sleep breathing disorder may exist is something to celebrate and not be fearful of or run away from. As medical reports indicate that approximately 90% of sleep apnea sufferers are undiagnosed in this country, knowing you may have the disorder means you've already beaten the high statistics. Most people keep trucking through life and have no clue they suffer from it. Many also don't understand the impact of what it does to their bodies and overall health.

The next things we like to share are the testing and treatment options that are available. Dental appliances and CPAP machines can both be successful options for treatment. In some cases, surgery is also an option. Unfortunately, often times patients are not always presented with all of the treatment or screening options.

Testing and screening for sleep apnea can be done through an overnight stay at a sleep lab or at home by using a home-testing kit. The sleep lab test can be a more detailed view of sleep issues. However, sleeping in your own bed can be an overall more accurate observation of a normal night of sleep.

People ask if treatment is necessary when the sleep apnea diagnosis is evaluated as "mild." Our simple answer: ABSOLUTELY. Even mild sleep apnea leaves people to feel tired throughout the day and can have a significant impact on the quality of people's lives and their overall health. Unfortunately, we have heard of sleep technicians telling people they are okay to live with a diagnosis of mild to moderate sleep apnea. No one should be okay to live in an ongoing state of foginess and sleepiness. Even after one night of treatment, a person can start to feel substantially better.

We hope this information provides encouragement to those who believe they may be suffering from sleep apnea. If you would like to take a quick, online preliminary screening for sleep apnea, please visit SleepTest.com or call us immediately.