

Sleep apnea: effects on memory and health

[Health & Medicine](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

People take sleeping for granted. Many sacrifice this period of rest and body's recovery from exhaustion when there are many tasks at hand but oftentimes, they do so because of other leisurely activities that are done during nighttime and the wee hours of the morning. No person can say he/she does not need sleep. It is as natural a need as hunger and thirst. Many studies come out on the daily news that influence the public. Usually these are health issues, either to guide people in their buying habits or to make them aware of the latest health scare and how to avoid them.

Sleep apnea literature also has frequently made it to those daily news programs. While the term seems common and "harmless," a lot of people do not know what it really is, how to diagnose its occurrence, and whether a need for treatment is in order. This paper attempts to explain some of the latest studies done and therapeutic or treatment approaches to be considered to any sufferer. B. Scholarly Review of the Literature Dr. Sean Drummond has spent time on researches especially on the outcome of sleep deprivation on the brain.

His study is specifically focused on military individuals who are oftentimes sleep-deprived; how this affects the decision-making process and even as to how long it will take to recover from the deprivation (www.emaxhealth.com/46/6912.html). "We can't keep as many things online at any one time when we're sleep deprived. Sleep deprivation significantly impairs attention, working memory performance, our ability to drive. It has the same effect as alcohol does," Dr. Drummond says.

The Drummond study, although has sleep deprivation and its effects as its focal point, has bearings as well in the problem of sleep apnea. In a study <https://assignbuster.com/sleep-apnea-effects-on-memory-and-health/>

like this, it helps us understand that whenever the brain undergoes deprivation, many individual activities will be affected; even at times fatal (www.emaxhealth.com/46/6912.html). In two studies commissioned by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the researchers tried to establish the consequences of breathing problems on mental development and intelligence. The studies, observed children and infants, with ages one year old and five year old.

Infants experiencing apnea, characterized by multiple brief breathing pauses, or slow heart rates while asleep showed a lower performance on the tests for mental development in comparison with infants their age. The second study utilized data from observations made on five year old children. This demonstrated that intelligence and memory are affected by breathing problems. The children in the study had frequent snoring, loud or noisy breathing while asleep, or sleep apneas. Researchers concluded that children who experience these problems tend to have behavioral problems than other children (www.hlbi.nih.gov/sleep).

“ The findings from these studies support other research that has shown that breathing problems during sleep are associated with serious health consequences in children,” said Carl E. Hunt, M. D. , NIH director of the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research (NCSDR). “ However, at this point we don’t know if the sleep problems during these episodes cause the decline in test scores or if the sleep episodes and the lower test scores are both related to some common underlying mechanism. ”

Definitions of Variables

So what is sleep apnea? How many are affected by it? Sleep apnea is a breathing problem occurring during sleep. Breathing stops for about ten seconds and this occurs in a minimum of five times within one hour. There are different grades of sleep apnea: Mild apnea, which results to only a few symptoms. Nevertheless, this may still result to low oxygen levels, the outcome of which can be life-threatening. Sleep apnea occurs frequently in people who smoke, drink alcoholic beverages and who are overweight. At times, this is also found in people at high altitudes.

Moreover, there are two kinds of sleep apnea: the Obstructive Sleep Apnea and the Central Sleep Apnea. The former is a result of air being blocked in the individual's airways whereas the latter has something to do with a problem in the nerves that control the breathing mechanism ([www. theacpa. org.](http://www.theacpa.org)).

Discussion

People's age bracket or those affected with Obstructive sleep apnea are for the most part, men ages 30 to 50 years old. This is shown to be occurring in about four to nine (4-9%) percent of middle aged men, in about two to four (2-4%) middle aged women.

However, experts say that approximately eighty to ninety percent of people with sleep apnea go undiagnosed ([www. theacpa. org.](http://www.theacpa.org)). Individuals who have small tongues or mouth or are overweight will be more likely to experience. At times, enlarged tonsils or adenoids are also considered as factors toward the problem. The central sleep apnea type is quite rare, on the other hand. Here, the region of the brain and nerves regulating the

breathing process are found to be functioning abnormally which results in impaired breathing. Its contributing factors are head injuries and stroke (www.theacpa.org).

Symptoms of both types may be noticed by the afflicted individual's partner or family member who communicates these to the person concerned. These symptoms include: restless sleep, frequent urination in the night, change in personality, loud snoring, and headache in the morning, poor memory and concentration and daytime sleepiness (www.theacpa.org). How is sleep apnea diagnosed? The doctor will check the nose and throat for any obstruction while breathing. One may have an endoscopy of the nose and throat as well as X-rays or a CT scan on the head and neck.

If given the time, a person may undertake sleep studies. If possible, the sleep apnea sufferer must confirm this earlier to avoid the complications brought about by the disorder. This problem increases the risk of auto accidents, hypertension and cardiovascular disease (might lead to heart failure, heart attack and stroke) (www.theacpa.org). What treatments are given to sleep apnea sufferers? The primary treatment has something to do with changes in one's lifestyle. Those who are overweight must start to reduce weight. Even a percent loss can contribute a lot to the changes.

As much as possible, the avoidance of alcohol intake during evenings should be made. Use of CPAP or the continuous positive airway pressure appliance which is a nose mask used during sleep to prevent the individual's airway to collapse is found to be very effective but probably inconvenient to the wearer (http://www.doctorsforadults.com/topics/dfa_sleep.htm) People take sleeping for granted. Many sacrifice this period of rest and body's recovery <https://assignbuster.com/sleep-apnea-effects-on-memory-and-health/>

from exhaustion when there are many tasks at hand but oftentimes, they do so because of other leisurely activities that are done during nighttime and the wee hours of the morning.

No person can say he/she does not need sleep. It is as natural a need as hunger and thirst. Many studies come out on the daily news that influence the public. Usually these are health issues, either to guide people in their buying habits or to make them aware of the latest health scare and how to avoid them. Sleep apnea literature also has frequently made it to those daily news programs. While the term seems common and "harmless," a lot of people do not know what it really is, how to diagnose its occurrence, and whether a need for treatment is in order.

This paper attempts to explain some of the latest studies done and therapeutic or treatment approaches to be considered to any sufferer. B. Scholarly Review of the Literature Dr. Sean Drummond has spent time on researches especially on the outcome of sleep deprivation on the brain. His study is specifically focused on military individuals who are oftentimes sleep-deprived; how this affects the decision-making process and even as to how long it will take to recover from the deprivation (www.emaxhealth.com/46/6912.html). We can't keep as many things online at any one time when we're sleep deprived. Sleep deprivation significantly impairs attention, working memory performance, our ability to drive. It has the same effect as alcohol does," Dr. Drummond says.

The Drummond study, although has sleep deprivation and its effects as its focal point, has bearings as well in the problem of sleep apnea. In a study like this, it helps us understand that whenever the brain undergoes <https://assignbuster.com/sleep-apnea-effects-on-memory-and-health/>

deprivation, many individual activities will be affected; even at times fatal (www.emaxhealth.com/46/6912.tml). In two studies commissioned by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the researchers tried to establish the consequences of breathing problems on mental development and intelligence. The studies, observed children and infants, with ages one year old and five year old. Infants experiencing apnea, characterized by multiple brief breathing pauses, or slow heart rates while asleep showed a lower performance on the tests for mental development in comparison with infants their age. The second study utilized data from observations made on five year old children.

This demonstrated that intelligence and memory are affected by breathing problems. The children in the study had frequent snoring, loud or noisy breathing while asleep, or sleep apneas. Researchers concluded that children who experience these problems tend to have behavioral problems than other children (www.nhlbi.nih.gov/sleep). “ The findings from these studies support other research that has shown that breathing problems during sleep are associated with serious health consequences in children,” said Carl E. Hunt, M. D. , NIH director of the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research (NCSDR).

However, at this point we don't know if the sleep problems during these episodes cause the decline in test scores or if the sleep episodes and the lower test scores are both related to some common underlying mechanism. ”

Definitions of Variables So what is sleep apnea? How many are affected by it? Sleep apnea is a breathing problem occurring during sleep. Breathing stops for about ten seconds and this occurs in a minimum of five times

within one hour. There are different grades of sleep apnea: Mild apnea, which results to only a few symptoms.

Nevertheless, this may still result to low oxygen levels, the outcome of which can be life-threatening. Sleep apnea occurs frequently in people who smoke, drink alcoholic beverages and who are overweight. At times, this is also found in people at high altitudes. Moreover, there are two kinds of sleep apnea: the Obstructive Sleep Apnea and the Central Sleep Apnea. The former is a result of air being blocked in the individual's airways whereas the latter has something to do with a problem in the nerves that control the breathing mechanism (www. theacpa. org.). III.

Discussion People's age bracket or those affected with Obstructive sleep apnea are for the most part, men ages 30 to 50 years old. This is shown to be occurring in about four to nine (4-9%) percent of middle aged men, in about two to four (2-4%) middle aged women. However, experts say that approximately eighty to ninety percent of people with sleep apnea go undiagnosed (www. theacpa. org.). Individuals who have small tongues or mouth or are overweight will be more likely to experience. At times, enlarged tonsils or adenoids are also considered as factors toward the problem.

The central sleep apnea type is quite rare, on the other hand. Here, the region of the brain and nerves regulating the breathing process are found to be functioning abnormally which results in impaired breathing. Its contributing factors are head injuries and stroke (www. theacpa. org.). Symptoms of both types maybe noticed by the afflicted individual's partner or family member who communicates these to the person concerned.

These symptoms include: restless sleep, frequent urination in the night, change in personality, loud snoring, and headache in the morning, poor memory and concentration and daytime sleepiness ([www. heacpa. org.](http://www.heacpa.org)).

How is sleep apnea diagnosed? The doctor will check the nose and throat for any obstruction while breathing. One may have an endoscopy of the nose and throat as well as X-rays or a CT scan on the head and neck. If given the time, a person may undertake sleep studies. If possible, the sleep apnea sufferer must confirm this earlier to avoid the complications brought about by the disorder. This problem increases the risk of auto accidents, hypertension and cardiovascular disease (might lead to heart failure, heart attack and stroke) [www. theacpa. org.](http://www.theacpa.org)).

What treatments are given to sleep apnea sufferers? The primary treatment has something to do with changes in one's lifestyle. Those who are overweight must start to reduce weight. Even a percent loss can contribute a lot to the changes. As much as possible, the avoidance of alcohol intake during evenings should be made. Use of CPAP or the continuous positive airway pressure appliance which is a nose mask used during sleep to prevent the individual's airway to collapse is found to be very effective but probably inconvenient to the wearer ([http://www. doctorsforadults. com/topics/dfa_slee. htm](http://www.doctorsforadults.com/topics/dfa_slee.htm))