

Hello, I am Doctor Ronan Donnelly, and I am a respiratory consultant and lead consultant for the obstructive sleep apnoea service in the Northern Trust. Today, I'm going to explain what obstructive sleep apnoea is and what makes a person more likely to be affected with it and the risks associated with untreated sleep apnoea.

Later in this video, one of our sleep specialist nurses, Margo Carberry, will talk about some of the things you can do to help yourself or someone else diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnoea. She will also discuss the main treatment option offered in the Northern Trust, which is CPAP, and this stands for continuous positive airway pressure.

When we sleep, the muscles in our throats relax and let air flow in freely. In obstructive sleep apnoea, your airway closes, the flow of air stops, and you stop breathing for a short time. If your airway closes for 10 seconds or more, it is called apnoea. During this time, oxygen levels in your blood stream drop.

Your brain will start your breathing again, often with a grunt or a gasp and some movement. This causes a disturbance to your sleep, although you may not wake up fully enough to be aware of it. Once you relax and fall back into a sleep, the cycle starts again. In severe sleep apnoea, this cycle can happen hundreds of times per night.

People with the following have a higher risk of being diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnoea. Middle aged men, women past menopause, women in the later stages of pregnancy, if you're overweight or obese, people with a large neck size, which is 17 inches or 43 centimetres or more. People with a small airway, a setback lower jaw, or a small lower jaw.

Large tonsils, a large tongue, or nasal blockage. If you have a medical condition that makes some of these factors more likely, such as Down syndrome, type 2 diabetes, or chronic heart disease. Obstructive sleep apnoea can be made worse by drinking alcohol, using sleeping pills, or other sedating medication and smoking.

Without treatment, sleep apnoea can lead to other problems including high blood pressure, a higher chance of having a stroke, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, depression, a higher chance of having an accident caused by tiredness, And difficulty concentrating in work or school. People react differently to CPAP therapy, but you're likely to benefit significantly and you will have had more energy and be less sleepy.

If your driving was affected by excessive sleepiness and if you can satisfy the DVLNI, That your sleepiness is under control, you will be considered safe to drive. If you sleep in the same room with a partner, they will sleep better too, as you will snore less and be less prone to movements during your sleep.

Hello, my name is Margo Carberry. I'm a sleep apnoea nurse and I work in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Today, I'm going to talk to you about the type of things you can do to help yourself if you are diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnoea and commenced on CPAP therapy. CPAP therapy is the primary therapy provided to people with obstructive sleep apnoea.

If your sleep apnoea is significant, you may be prescribed with CPAP therapy. But there are a number of things you can do in addition to therapy to assist you in managing your condition. If you're overweight, losing weight will have a positive impact on your sleep apnoea symptoms. In some cases it may reduce the need for therapy completely.

Exercise regularly. Being active can reduce symptoms. Have good sleep habits. Think about having a dark, quiet room to sleep in and going to bed and waking up at the same time each day. Sleep on your side. If you find this difficult, you could try a special or wedge pillow to help you sleep comfortably on your side or tape a tennis ball to the back of your nightwear.

If you smoke, consider stopping smoking. Avoid alcohol, especially close to bedtime. Avoid using sleeping tablets unless recommended by your doctor. They can often make sleep apnoea worse. Continuous positive airway pressure, often abbreviated as CPAP, is the most effective treatment for moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnoea.

Once you have had a diagnostic testing to confirm the diagnosis, you may be offered a loan CPAP device to help improve your symptoms. A CPAP device is a small machine consisting of a hose and a mask that you wear over your nose and or mouth. It provides a continuous flow of air under pressure to help keep your airway open while you sleep.

Research shows that the longer you use your therapy each night, the more you will benefit from it. We ask that you use it for at least four hours every night. When you receive your loan CPAP device, an installer will demonstrate the operation of the device and measure and fit you with a suitable mask.

Sometimes, to improve your comfort, the mask may need to be changed out for a different size or type. It may take some time for you to adjust to your diagnosis and the CPAP equipment. CPAP therapy can feel odd when you start to use it, but people who stick at it, every night for the duration of their sleep, typically notice an improvement in symptoms within one week.

Some people adjust quicker than others to CPAP therapy, but it is important that you try to use the device from the start. If you are experiencing problems you can contact the equipment provider by telephone, or if they are unable to help you can phone the sleep physiology team at Braid Valley Hospital. The numbers will be shown at the end of the video. For a reminder on the operation of devices or how best to fit your mask. Check out the other videos in this series. Approximately six weeks after you receive the loan CPAP device, you'll be given an appointment to attend a sleep review with a sleep physiologist.

This review is to assess how effective the therapy is working for you and make any changes in device settings to optimize the therapy.

Physiologist will also answer any questions and try and address any unresolved problems you have noticed while using the device. Some people will require a further follow up review. Whilst every effort will be made to help you in using the loan CPAP device, some people choose not to continue using it.

Before you make a decision to just continue using your CPAP device, It is important for you to consider the effects this may have on your symptoms and the risks excessive sleepiness can have.

Please take a few minutes to complete our feedback questionnaire on the video you have watched today. Thank you.