

Patient Do's and Don'ts

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If you have been diagnosed with Obstructive Sleep Apnea:

- Do** **Inform all your physicians** that you have Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) and how that disorder is being treated. If possible, show him/her a copy of your sleep study report.
- Do** **Tell a spouse, family member, or friend** about your diagnosis of Obstructive Sleep Apnea and about any treatment you are receiving, so that she/he can inform your physician in an emergency situation.
- Do** **Take your CPAP machine with you if you are being admitted to a hospital** (if you are being treated with CPAP). This is especially important if you will be having an operation or a procedure that requires anesthesia or the use of sedative or pain relief medication.
- Do** **Tell your physician before you have an operation or procedure that requires anesthesia**, or the use of sedatives or pain relief medication, if you have supine-positional OSA (OSA while sleeping on your back). You should tell your physician that you have OSA even if you are **not** being treated with CPAP.
- Avoid** **Narcotic pain medications such as morphine**, which can lead to a life-threatening condition called *hypoxia* (low oxygen) in even in patients with only mild OSA. This is especially true if the narcotic is given intramuscularly or intravenously. **If you are already taking a prescription narcotic pain medication, you must tell your physician** that you have been diagnosed with Obstructive Sleep Apnea.
- Avoid** The use of **sleeping pills** and other medication known to cause sedation, or use with caution.
- Avoid** **Operating a motor vehicle or other heavy machinery** if your OSA causes you to be sleepy. You should avoid operating vehicles or heavy machinery until you are adequately treated.
- Avoid** **Gaining weight.** If you are overweight, lose weight. Obstructive Sleep apnea is strongly linked to obesity. Weight gain can make your OSA worse. (If you are overweight, weight loss can help decrease the severity of OSA).
- Avoid** **Alcoholic beverages within 3 hours of bedtime** (or use with moderation). Alcohol is known to make Obstructive Sleep Apnea worse and can contribute to weight gain.
- Avoid** **Smoking.** If you smoke, quit. You are three times more likely to have OSA if you smoke than if you never smoked or if you stop smoking.
- Avoid** Sleeping at **high altitude**. Altitude can increase the severity and frequency of obstructive sleep apnea events.