

Why should I have a sleep study?

So that you stop feeling so tired, and for better health. Obstructive Sleep Apnea is one of the most common sleep disorders. Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) can cause excessive daytime sleepiness and snoring, and is associated with obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, and diabetes.

The biggest reason to have your sleep study is simply excessive daytime sleepiness. You feel more tired than you should. Excessive daytime sleepiness lowers the quality of life, affects relationships, hinders work performance, can cause personality issues such as irritability and lack of focus, and can create dangerous situations such as impaired driving. You may feel tired all day and nearly every day; you may feel like you cannot live your life to the fullest. Diagnosing and treating a sleep disorder could give you back your energy, alertness, and enthusiasm – It could give you back your real life.

Snoring is another significant symptom of OSA. Snoring can be an issue for the bed partner and can cause discord, relationship issues and separate bedrooms. It can be embarrassing or make the snorer an object of ridicule. About 60% of people who snore have obstructive sleep apnea, and nearly everyone who has obstructive sleep apnea snores.

Obesity can also be related to sleep disorders. Sleep disorders can contribute to obesity due to low energy, daytime sleepiness, and apathy. Obesity is a risk factor for OSA.

Sleep disorders are also related to other significant medical conditions. OSA is associated with heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, and diabetes.

The reason to have a sleep study is to find out why you are sleeping poorly and what treatment options might help so you can improve your quality of life and your health.

Do I have my own private room?

Yes! At our sleep centers, each patient has their own private room. The rooms are clean and comfortable. We have professional housekeeping and freshly laundered linen and bedspreads for each patient (of course!). We want the experience to be as comfortable, inviting, and stress-free as possible. We aim for a comfortable, clean, hotel-like atmosphere.

Our technologists work from a separate room and monitor your sleep through a computer. The technologist applies electrodes on your scalp and body before you go to sleep. There is also a night video camera to monitor body position and associate body position with any sleeping issues and the room can be completely dark. Please feel free to bring blankets, pillow, fan, and any other items from home that will make you feel more comfortable.

Give me a quick overview

An overnight sleep study is a step toward better sleep and better health, that is why your physician ordered the study for you. It is also a relaxing and comfortable experience. For your overnight sleep test, you will come to one of our sleep centers, located in a medical office building or hospital. The rooms are set up as private, hotel-like bedrooms. They are comfortable and clean and, depending on the facility, you have your own bathroom and shower.

We have professional daily housekeeping and linen service. We have wi-fi and cable television options in all our centers. Our technologists monitor the study from another room.

We always strive to provide a clean, safe environment for our patients and staff, and during this period of coronavirus concern we have asked staff to be especially vigilant. You can find out more about our steps to reduce risks under the FAQ “Coronavirus – What we’re doing”. *Please reschedule your appointment if you have had any of the following symptoms in the past 2 weeks: runny nose, headache, cough, sputum production, fever, or chest/lung pain.* Please contact us to reschedule your appointment and we will reschedule at a future date outside the period of additional risk.

Please check the address of your appointment on your paperwork that was mailed to you. Your appointment time will also be in the mailing. When you arrive at the center, the technologist will explain the process in detail and answer any questions you may have. The study is painless. The technologist will place electrodes on your head, face, torso, and legs using a water-soluble paste that you can wash off in the morning with warm water. The electrodes have wires that attach to the recording equipment and the technologist will bundle the wires into a ponytail to help keep them out of your way. If you need to go to the bathroom during the study, just call out and the technologist will disconnect you. If your physician has ordered a titration study to see if a CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) device might help you sleep better, the technologist will wake you briefly in the middle of the night to put the mask on. It is not oxygen – it is just room air at a slightly higher pressure to help keep your airway open and to allow you to breathe without obstruction. We ask that you shower prior to the study and not apply skin lotion, makeup, or hair products. Please arrive with dry hair. Please wear 2-piece sleepwear with a top and bottom, such as a 2-piece pajamas or gym shorts and a t-shirt. Boxer shorts alone are not acceptable.

If you are taking any medications, please ask your physician if you should continue these during the study. If you use supplemental oxygen, please ask your physician for instructions, or continue to use the oxygen as your physician has prescribed. We recommend that you avoid caffeine and alcohol the day and evening before the study. Most patients sleep well during the test, and we find that nearly all patients sleep enough during the night so that we have enough sleep time and data for a successful test. Many patients tell us they slept better than usual during the test. If you do not sleep well away from home, you may want to ask your doctor about bringing a sleep aid with you for the test. *For more information on prescriptions and sleep aids for the sleep test see FAQ “Can I take a sleep aid or sleeping pill before my sleep study?”.*

The electrodes and wires record brain activity, breathing effort, oxygen levels and movement of the legs and eyes. After the study, our technicians score the data, then a physician interprets the data to make a diagnosis and possibly recommend treatment options. We send the signed report to your physician and they, then, discuss the results and any treatment approach with you. It takes 7 to 10 working days to score and interpret the data and send the report to your physician. **Our technologists cannot discuss the results of the study.**

If you need help getting in or out of bed, getting from one place to another or going to the bathroom or have special needs, or help dispensing medications (we cannot dispense medications nor do we have any medications or pain relievers of any kind on-site) you may bring a caregiver, who will stay in an adjacent room or we will have a PCA from the hospital available to help during your test. Children under age 16 require a parent, guardian, or authorized adult to stay with them. We do not allow spouses or other individuals for companionship alone. We also do not allow anyone to stay in the same room with the patient. We may have rooms adjacent available or we also have a family suite fully equipped with TV, full-sized bed, bathroom, and shower.

Please keep in mind we need **six hours of recording time** for insurance compliance so discuss bedtime and wake up time with your technologist if you need to get up early for work.

If you are unable to attend your appointment please call at your earliest convenience as we have a wait list of people that could take your appointment time and we can reschedule you at that time as well.

Your sleep study will be a comfortable and relaxing experience. You will sleep even better knowing that you are taking an active step towards improving your sleep and your health. We look forward to seeing you.

Do you have a “no show fee” or cancellation policy?

Yes. To prepare for your appointment, we reserve a technologist, location, and other resources. If you do not show up to your appointment, it means that another patient who needs services has not been able to get them as soon as they otherwise could have. It may also mean that we must cancel a technologist and they will lose out on work hours. We have a no-show fee if you cancel your appointment without giving us at least a 24-hour notice. If you are unable to attend your appointment due to illness, we waive the no show fee but please do call us and let us know at your earliest convenience.

What is an in-center sleep test?

An in-center polysomnography (PSG) test takes place at one of our convenient sleep center locations (links attached to these words). The sleep centers offer all the comforts and amenities of home, including a private, comfortable room where you can relax and have a typical night's sleep.

PSG records your brain waves, heart rate and breathing while you sleep. It also charts your eye movements, limb movements and oxygen in your blood. PSG can diagnose or rule out sleep disorders such as obstructive and central sleep apnea, restless leg syndrome (RLS) and more in adults and children.

In children, PSG may be used to diagnose or rule out suspected sleep apnea due to enlarged tonsils or adenoids; an obese child may have OSA due to excess tissue in the airway.

A titration test is used to determine your optimal pressure on CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure). This is a treatment for OSA. CPAP is a piece of equipment that blows room air through a mask that you wear over your nose (or both nose and mouth) that opens the tissues in the back of the throat and keeps that airway open so you can breathe normally during sleep. Proper CPAP settings can eliminate most apnea events. It is performed when a patient has been previously diagnosed with sleep apnea and the patient wears the equipment the entire night during the sleep test.

How do I schedule a sleep study?

To get a sleep study, you must see your physician and they must order the study. We cannot do any studies without a prescription from a doctor. Everything we do is based on that order. It can take 7-10 days after you see your doctor before we contact you to schedule your appointment. Once we receive an order, we check your insurance to check if they need any additional information from us before we conduct the test. We cannot schedule your appointment until we have all the needed information. We will contact you by phone to set up an appointment time that works best with your schedule.

When will my sleep study take place?

Most sleep studies start in the evening, first arrival at 6:45 PM. There may be multiple patients scheduled per each technologist at the sleep center. They will spend around 45 minutes or so with each patient completing paperwork, educating, and completing the hook-up where electrodes are placed on your head, face, and body. The recording needs to have six hours of recording time to meet insurance guidelines so start and end times should be discussed with your technologist if you need to get up early for work, appointments, etc.

Day studies are also available for night shift workers. Your regular sleeping hours should be discussed with your doctor so that specific study times can be spelled out on their order for your test.

If you are staying for an MSLT (Multiple Sleep Latency Test) following your sleep test, the start and end times are variable. Your technologist will discuss times with you when you wake up for the day.

What do I wear for my sleep test?

Two-piece pajamas (separate top & bottom). Undergarments do not qualify for pajamas (such as men's boxers); shorts or sleeping pants must be worn. Even though you may have a favorite night gown or prefer to sleep au naturel, two-piece pajamas are a must for the comfort of the technologist performing your study and the need to attach electrodes and leads in various positions around your waist, legs, etc.

Can I be early/late for my appointment?

No—it is important that you arrive on time. Typically, you will not be the only person completing a sleep study in the sleep center that night. Even though you will have a private room, the technologist will have another patient that night. Setting up for the sleep study requires attaching multiple electrodes to different places on your body. This requires dedicated time and attention by our staff. If you are early or late, this may disrupt your technologist's schedule for the night and impact your study or the study of another patient. Please stick with the appointment time provided and call us if you are going to arrive late.

What should I bring with me?

- **Pajamas** (separate top and bottom)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Book/magazine (if these help you get settled to fall asleep)
- Snack/water bottle—feel free to bring a snack bar or piece of fruit. We have water on-site, but you might like your own.
- **Pre-Study Questionnaire**. Please complete the questionnaire (both sides of paper) which will be mailed in your packet after your test is scheduled and bring it with you the night of your test if you choose not to mail it back to us.
- Fan, blankets, pillow from home. Anything else that will make you more comfortable. Rooms do have ceiling fans.

Will the technologist tell me the results of the study?

No, the technologist cannot give you the results of your sleep study. They cannot provide any diagnosis or final PAP pressure.

When will I get my test results?

You will receive your results in about two weeks (10 business days). Each sleep study is scored by a registered technologist and then reviewed by a sleep specialist. Please contact your referring physician to discuss your results and next steps.

Who received the final sleep study report?

The ordering physician receives the final report, interpretation, and recommendation. Also, the interpretation can be viewed on CentraCare's MyChart.

Can I take a sleep aid or sleeping pill before my sleep study?

Our goal is to watch you sleep so that we can evaluate you for a sleep disorder. When a patient is unable to fall asleep during the test, it inhibits our ability to monitor their sleeping patterns. It is common for some patients to take sleeping pills to help achieve the goals of the study. If you have trouble sleeping away from home, discuss this with your doctor and ask for a sleep aid to be used the night of your test if you wish.

Points to consider before taking a sleeping aid before your sleep study:

- Continue to take any prescribed medications that you usually take (unless otherwise instructed by your doctor). If you usually take a medication at night, bring it with you to the sleep center.
- List all medication, prescribed or over the counter (including any sleep aids), that you have taken, on your medication list on your questionnaire.

- We do not know what effect the sleep aid may have on you, so please arrange for safe transportation home from the sleep center in the morning.
- Generally, sleep aids have little or no effect on the diagnosis made from your sleep study data, but the reasons for having the sleep study need to be considered. If you are having the sleep study to evaluate sleep disordered breathing, like OSA, the sleep aid should not have any effect on your normal breathing patterns. Sleep aids may change your sleep architecture like reducing the latency to sleep onset, altering the depth of sleep, changing the percentage of time spent in some sleep stages and increasing your total sleep time or sleep efficiency which could impact your diagnosis for other sleep disorders like insomnia.

It is best to talk to your doctor if you have any concerns. Most importantly, please make sure that you include the sleep aid, if you decide to take it, on your medications list.

Can I drink alcohol before my sleep study?

We do not recommend drinking before your sleep study unless otherwise outlined by your doctor. If it is a normal nightly routine, your doctor may have you follow that routine for your test. Alcohol does impact sleep; therefore, it may alter your results. For example, some people only have sleep apnea in REM sleep, so if alcohol were to cause you to miss REM sleep during your sleep study, you may have a false negative result. If you have mild apnea, it may appear worse. If you are coming to the sleep center for a titration study, you may be titrated at a different pressure than is required for you during a normal night of sleep. We would not refuse the study unless the patient's behavior was inappropriate.

Can I smoke during my sleep study?

If you are a smoker and have scheduled or are considering scheduling a sleep study, you are probably worried about how you will make it through the night if you are unable to smoke. You will not be allowed to take any smoke breaks while on CentraCare grounds. All CentraCare campuses and parking lots are smoke free; this includes e-cigarettes. Even if you are a heavy smoker, we cannot allow you to leave the facility to smoke in the middle of your test. There are no restrictions for nicotine patches or gum. If you are concerned about this, talk with your doctor.

Can I wear gel or acrylic nails or nail polish during my sleep study?

The equipment used to get your oxygen reading during your sleep study, whether overnight or daytime in a sleep center or in-home, is called a pulse oximeter. It is a simple sensor that is usually placed on your fingertip. It measures how much of the hemoglobin in blood is carrying oxygen, this is called oxygen saturation or SaO₂. The sensor emits a red light that beams through the finger and to a light detector on the other side. Part of the light is absorbed by the finger and part not absorbed reaches the light detector.

A sleep study is invalid without oximetry. Wearing artificial nails can be an issue with sleep studies because acrylic creates a barrier between the sensor and the blood in your finger. Even less of the light will reach the light detector. Additionally, color affects the absorption of the sensor. So, depending on the color of the nail polish, this can affect the ability of the sensor to accurately measure your blood oxygen. Red nail polish is the worst.

If a patient tests with acrylics or nail polish, it is possible that the starting oxygen reading (called SaO₂ value) will be lower than actual baseline. What we are looking for in the study is any change from the baseline.

If there was any issue with the oxygen reading during the study, the sleep technologist would see the signal and should be able to correct it ahead of a failure. If the nails are too obstructed, the technician may be able to switch the pulse oximeter to a toe or an earlobe.

If no signal can be obtained during the polysomnography, the study would be canceled due to technical issues in place of continuing the recording and repeating.