



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

January 2023

FITNESS FOCUS

NEW YEAR. NEW YOU.

IS A CPAP CHECK-UP NEEDED?

The new year is a good time to review your health goals and your personal health maintenance plan. If you have chronic health conditions and have yet to professionally assess your sleep quality, this is a good time to have that discussion with your doctor.

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is a common condition that can interfere with a patient's health and fitness goals due to poor sleep. You can learn more about OSA [HERE](#).

Therapy for OSA typically utilizes a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) device worn by the patient when sleeping. The CPAP device enables the patient to breathe with far less effort through the now open airway thereby helping to correct the associated health concerns.

If you are already using CPAP therapy, it may be time to schedule a CPAP check-up with your ordering provider. Here are the two questions to consider.

Question #1 - Are your CPAP settings still delivering the optimal therapy for you? A "compliance report" for your prescribing doctor from your CPAP vendor can be pulled directly from the data card in your machine for this review.

Question #2 - Is your insurance still covering the cost of your equipment re-supplies? For continued coverage, insurance typically requires a compliance check with a doctor's order once every two years. (kt)

HEALTH TIP



SLEEP APNEA – AN OVERVIEW

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) is a condition in which the soft tissues in the back of the throat and neck compress the airway during sleep. This blockage of the airway causes not only snoring but pauses in breathing called apnea. Apnea is problematic in two main ways. First, the pauses cause a drop in blood oxygen levels. Second, the brain partially "wakes up" to direct the body to take a deep and concerted breath to open the collapsed airway. This brain waking prevents the brain from falling into a deep, restful, and restorative sleep...night after night. Thus, a patient with OSA wakes in the morning not feeling rested and struggles with the hallmark daytime fatigue.

The primary concern with OSA is the stress put onto the cardiovascular system. OSA can also contribute to high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. The chronic daytime fatigue can lead to depression, mood changes, car and workplace accidents.

Diagnosis of OSA is made with a sleep study measuring oxygen levels, apneas, and brain sleep activity. Originally, sleep studies were performed in hospitals or specialized facilities. Now, many sleep studies can be completed at home with specialized equipment placed and worn by the patient.

The mainstay of treatment for OSA is CPAP, although very mild cases may be treated with special oral mouthpieces. CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) is air pressure delivered via a nasal / oral mask that "stents" open the airway keeping those soft tissues from collapsing down the airway thereby allowing effective breathing. (db)



DOCTOR'S NOTE

EVIDENCE-BASED vs. EMINENCE-BASED MEDICINE

By Dr. Mike Tracy

The National Institute of Health (NIH) defines evidence-based medicine (EBM) as follows: "A systematic approach to medicine in which doctors and other health care professionals use the best available scientific evidence from clinical research to help make decisions about the care of individual patients." However, the term EBM has been used by various groups and organizations to support bold medical recommendations in situations where there is little to no medical research to warrant the EBM claim. Expert guidelines are strongest when based on scientific evidence and weakest when based on opinion.

The term "Eminence-Based Medicine" was coined in a 1999 satirical article published by the British Medical Journal. This article highlighted the tendency for physicians to rely on experience over scientific studies when making decisions about patient care. The modern day version of this is the "expert guideline" where a group of experienced providers make recommendations by relying on the opinions of a small panel of physicians more than on critical appraisal of scientific studies. The danger of eminence-based medicine is that it is subject to influence by strong outside forces, including political pressures and pharmaceutical money.

Evidence-based medicine in its purest form reminds me of the quote from Joe Friday on Dragnet: "Just the facts, ma'am." If the evidence base is weak, then citing "evidence-based medicine" to support a position is misleading.

307HEALTH
250 N. EVARTS STREET
POWELL, WY 82435
307HEALTH.ORG

BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.

PRACTICE NEWS



FREE INTERACTIVE LEARNING (cont. from Healthcare News)

The GetSetUp program also helps active agers become more fit, learn to manage their finances, develop new skills and even supplement their income. Special “New Year, New Me” programming is running into the new year to help people accomplish their goals in one or all three learning tracks on health and wellness [HERE](#), money and business [HERE](#) and growth and development [HERE](#).

GetSetUp helps address aging health by assuring older adults stay connected to the technical tools they need to age in place at home. “Research has shown older adults who learn how to use their tech devices to stay connected with family and interact with others will age more successfully,” Clark said.

GetSetUp’s custom-built video learning interface is available around the clock and has been tailored to older adults of all tech levels. The platform offers support via phone and in all classes to help learners with technology, and includes a booking system complete with regular reminders and after-class notes.

Clark noted many classes are available in multiple languages including English, Mandarin, Hindi; a growing number of weekly classes are offered in Spanish.

Wyoming’s older adults can safely and easily connect with a worldwide community by visiting “getsetup.io/partner/wyoming” online [HERE](#).

Because of the WDH Aging Division partnership with GetSetUp, the classes are free for state residents. **To avoid fees, residents should use the coupon code “Wyoming” while booking classes.** (kt)

DOCTORS CROSS-COVER PATIENTS

When your doctor “signs out” on vacation, the covering doctor will cover the medical care needs of the absent doctor’s patients. 307Health members can be assured of medical care service and continuity even when their doctor is signed out. (kt)



MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS

TYPES OF MEDICAL CARE – WHEN & WHERE TO SEEK HELP

Medical care categories are helpful to understand when deciding when and where to seek care. A good rule-of-thumb is to seek emergency care help at a local hospital if essential life functions are at risk. Here are some general category descriptions.

- **ROUTINE CARE** – Prevention and routine care for new or chronic medical conditions that can be scheduled at a time that is convenient for both patient and provider during usual clinic hours when possible. Most medical care falls into this category. When texting or calling your doctor for routine care, please do so during scheduled weekday clinic hours of 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday when possible.
- **URGENT CARE** – Unexpected care needs that should be treated within a 24-hour window. Some examples include minor cuts, injury or sudden illness onset. This type of care is best suited to a text message to your Physician Access Number which can then followed by a call to the same number if a response has not been received in a reasonable time. Texting a photo of a new injury or rash can also be helpful to your doctor when deciding how to best proceed with urgent care. An urgent care clinic appointment will be scheduled by the doctor or nurse as needed following the initial text / phone review.
- **EMERGENCY CARE** – Care for illness or injury that comes on suddenly and / or unexpectedly that causes significant discomfort, disability or disorientation. Some examples include chest or severe abdominal pain, difficulty breathing, extensive bleeding or debilitating pain. This type of care is best delivered in a local emergency department with follow-up care coordinated by your 307Health doctor. If you are unsure that symptoms warrant an ER visit, call your physician to discuss. (kt)

**HEALTHCARE NEWS
And HISTORY**

**INTERACTIVE LEARNING
AVAILABLE FOR OLDER
ADULTS THIS WINTER**

The “GetSetUp” Program

Wyoming Dept of Health
December 12, 2022

A slate of free interactive online programming, supported by the Wyoming Department of Health and designed to increase activity and wellness among older Wyoming adults, is currently featuring a number of winter holiday options.

Jeff Clark, Community Health Section manager with the WDH Aging Division, said the “GetSetUp” digital education platform is designed to help older adults bridge the digital divide, combat social isolation and live more connected lives.

“Wyoming residents can access thousands of interactive classes taught by older adults to their peers on GetSetUp,” Clark said. General subjects available range from how to effectively use digital technology, to health and wellness through fitness and cooking to a full range of enrichment classes.

More than 4,000 Wyoming residents have participated in classes over the last year since WDH began its partnership with GetSetUp.

“The loneliness we hear many older people feel can sometimes get worse during the winter when weather conditions and the holidays can lead people to feel more isolated,” Clark said.

GetSetUp classes are a simple way to connect with others from one’s home throughout the holiday season and the winter. Online **HOLIDAY PROGRAMS** include topics such as Christmas market tours, photography tips, recipe help and craft ideas.

(Article continues in the “Practice News” box)