

CPAP found to improve sexual function, satisfaction in men with sleep apnea

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Men who suffer from obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) are seeing another potential benefit from continuous positive airway pressure therapy, or CPAP: improved sexual function and satisfaction in non-diabetic men under age 60.

A study out of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., assessed the erectile function and [libido](#) of 92 men who were newly diagnosed with OSA and starting CPAP therapy. Erectile dysfunction (ED) is common in OSA patients, and nearly half of the men in the Walter Reed study reported the presence of ED. Patients were assessed again after one, three and six months of CPAP therapy.

The results show that CPAP improved the sexual function and satisfaction in the majority of men in the study regardless of their level of erectile function reported at the very start. Those with ED had more robust improvements and even many without ED reported improved [sexual function](#) and satisfaction.

"We were surprised at how prevalent ED is in a relatively young population of men with [sleep apnea](#). The average age was 45," said Joseph Dombrowsky, MD, the study's primary investigator. "But we were similarly surprised at how robust a clinically significant response the men had with CPAP therapy."

OSA is a sleep-related breathing disorder that occurs when the tissue in the back of the throat collapses and blocks the airway, causing the body

to stop breathing during sleep. OSA disrupts sleep and can increase the risk of other health problems such as [heart disease](#) and stroke.

CPAP is the most common and effective treatment for OSA. The steady flow of air from a CPAP machine keeps the airway open and restores normal [oxygen levels](#) during sleep. This helps maintain a steady, healthy level of breathing through the night.

The abstract "The prevalence of erectile dysfunction and impact of CPAP therapy: a prospective analysis" is being presented today at SLEEP 2012, the 26th annual meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies (APSS) in Boston.

Provided by American Academy of Sleep Medicine

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