

Snoring without sleep apnea does not increase death or heart disease risk

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Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

(Medical Xpress)—A group of Australian researchers have achieved a world-first to demonstrate that objectively measured snoring, without more serious sleep apnea, does not increase mortality or cardiovascular disease.

Previous work from the group had found that [sleep](#) apnea increases [mortality risk](#) but until now it had not been clear whether snoring by itself might also increase cardiovascular disease.

The study conducted by the Woolcock Institute of [Medical Research](#) found that those who snored most of the night had no greater risk of death over the next 17 years than people who snored only 12 percent or less of the night or not at all.

The community-based sample of 380 people comprised [men and women](#) from the highly influential Busselton [Health Study](#) from Western Australian who underwent investigation with a home sleep apnea and snoring monitoring device in 1990.

The study helps clarify long-term risks after some clinic or hospital-based studies that had found suggestions that snoring alone might increase stroke risk.

Many previous studies had assessed snoring based on self-report.

Lead-author Dr Nathaniel Marshall, from the Woolcock Institute & the University of Sydney Nursing School said: "Because we snore only when we are asleep we are not really aware of it. So we rely on other people to tell us we snore.

"So in some cases people may be unaware they snore or may believe that when they are told they snore it is simply a one-off event and not their normal type of sleep.

"We do know already from this study that sleep apnea increases cardiovascular disease risk. Some of our colleagues are also looking closely to see whether snoring by itself might increase stroke risk in people who are highly susceptible. However the good news at the

moment seems to be that snoring, by itself, does not seem to appreciably increase [cardiovascular disease](#) or death rates."

Professor Ron Grunstein, senior author on the study and Head of Sleep and Circadian Research, Woolcock Institute & the University of Sydney Medical School said, "Obstructive [sleep apnea](#) is a disease that medical practitioners as well as the general public need to take it seriously. Snoring is certainly an acoustic problem to bed partners but not a condition that is likely of itself to cause cardiovascular harm."

The public needs to be educated about the potential impact of [snoring](#) on their health and quality of life. Good treatments are available and a detailed medical assessment is the key to finding the best treatments.

The study is published in September 2012 edition of the journal *SLEEP*.

More information:

www.journalsleep.org/ViewAbstract.aspx?pid=28636

Provided by Woolcock Institute of Medical Research

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