

'Elbow test' may predict sleep apnea

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Have you ever been "elbowed" by your bed partner because you were snoring? If yes, new research says you could have obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

Prior to polysomnography testing, researchers from the University of Saskatchewan asked 124 patients two questions: (1) Does your bed-partner ever poke or elbow you because you are snoring; and (2) Does your bed-partner ever poke or elbow you because you have stopped breathing?

Answering 'yes' to being awakened for snoring or apneic spells increased the likelihood of an apnea-hypopnea index (AHI) >5/h (indicating at least mild OSA) compared with 'no.'

Analysis also showed that as [disease severity](#) increased, patients were more likely to be awakened for snoring and apneic spells.

Researchers conclude that asking these two simple questions could significantly improve the pretest prediction of a [diagnosis](#) of OSA.

This study was presented during CHEST 2012, the annual meeting of the [American College of Chest Physicians](#), held October 20 – 25, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Provided by American College of Chest Physicians

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