

Cranial nerve stimulation shows promise as sleep apnea tx

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(HealthDay)—An implanted cranial nerve stimulation device might improve sleep patterns and quality of life for patients with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), according to findings presented this week at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, held from Sept. 27 to 30 in Dallas.

In the study, 126 participants received the implanted upper airway stimulation system. All had previously tried and failed to adhere to continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) treatment. A total of 111 of these patients completed a 30-month follow-up evaluation.

The researchers found that treatment was effective for more than half of the patients, based on sleepiness levels, [sleep](#)-related quality of life, diminished snoring, and oxygen intake levels. And 81 percent were still routinely using the device three years out.

Study lead author B. Tucker Woodson, M.D., a professor and chief of sleep medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, told *HealthDay* that many [patients](#) are unable to use CPAP successfully for various reasons. Some find it uncomfortable and can't tolerate the mask and the pressure. "It can even make their sleep worse, not better," he added. "But with this implantable device, what we've seen is an almost normalization of their sleep problems, along with a very promising level of long-term adherence."

The study was funded by the [device](#) manufacturer, Inspire Medical Systems of Maple Grove, Minn.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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