

Sleep apnea reporting low among individuals aged 65+

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(HealthDay)—From 1993 to 2011, physicians reported sleep apnea (SA)

in 0.3 percent of all office visits among individuals aged 65 years and older, according to a study published online May 4 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Andrew M. Namen, M.D., from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., and colleagues obtained data from the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey and the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey from 1993 to 2011. The authors sought to examine the frequency of coding diagnoses of SA in individuals aged 65 years and older.

The researchers found that physicians reported SA in 0.3 percent of all office visits in persons aged 65 years and older from 1993 to 2011. There was an increase in SA reported in visits, from 130,000 in 1993 to 2,070,000 in 2011; the annual per capita visit reporting rate increased from 0.07 to 0.74 percent. There was an increase in the proportion of documented SA visits by specialists in older populations, and a decrease in the proportion of visits among primary care providers. The average number of comorbidities was higher for [older adults](#) with a diagnosis of SA versus those without (1.8 versus 1.3).

"There has been an increasing role of specialists in [elderly adults](#) with SA, but a major opportunity remains among [primary care physicians](#) who can provide effective care of these individuals," the authors write. "As in younger adults, the role of screening for SA in elderly adults has not been established."

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