

Sleep Apnea & Pulmonary Hypertension

SLEEP APNEA

Have you been diagnosed with sleep apnea?

- » **Sleep apnea** is a disorder where a person's breathing stops and starts throughout their sleep.
- » Sleep apnea changes oxygen levels in the blood, which in turn can lead to increased blood pressure both in the body and in the lung arteries.
- » If you have certain forms of sleep apnea you are at risk of developing **pulmonary hypertension**.

What is pulmonary hypertension?

- » **Pulmonary hypertension (PH)** is a disease that can strike anyone regardless of age, sex, or background.
- » Pulmonary hypertension is defined by high blood pressure in the arteries of the lungs, which eventually weakens and enlarges the right side of the heart. This can lead to heart failure or even death.
- » People with sleep apnea are at risk of developing a type of pulmonary hypertension associated with lung disease. Adequate treatment of sleep apnea and correction of low oxygen levels overnight is required to improve or resolve the higher pressure in the arteries in the lungs.

Get informed

If you have sleep apnea and are experiencing these symptoms, talk to your doctor about pulmonary hypertension:

- » Breathlessness
- » Exercise intolerance
- » Swollen feet/legs
- » Fainting
- » Fatigue
- » Chest pain
- » Lightheadedness
- » Blue lips/fingers

Get screened

The primary screening test for pulmonary hypertension is an echocardiogram (a painless ultrasound of the heart). Additional tests may be required to measure the functioning of your heart and lungs.

Do you need a referral?

Ask your doctor whether you should be referred to a pulmonary hypertension clinic. For more information, visit www.phacanada.ca/findaphcentre



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A better life for all Canadians affected by pulmonary hypertension

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