

A multidisciplinary program to improve sleep and optimize positive airway pressure therapy

The treatment program is a new service offered by Stanford Sleep Disorders Clinic, motivated by our desire to improve access and to help our patients achieve maximum benefits with positive airway pressure therapy (PAP).

Dr. Tracy Kuo, a clinical psychologist, Diplomate of the American Board of Sleep Medicine and certified in Behavioral Sleep Medicine by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, leads a team of sleep physicians and sleep technologists to provide timely, coordinated care, education, clinical management, cognitive-behavioral interventions, and intensive support to patients on PAP therapy. Our goals are to provide the best and most efficient care to help our patients gain restorative sleep and to have a successful experience in acclimating to PAP therapy.

Although the treatment program is delivered in a group format, patients receive tailored recommendations to address their individual challenges in using PAP, in how to improve sleep and manage daytime symptoms. Research and our clinical experience indicate a substantial number of patients find having mutual support from each other is a unique positive therapeutic element and enhances their commitment to treatment.

Enrollment

Call for starting date

A new series is offered every 6-10 weeks. Each treatment group enrolls 8-14 patients. Call our clinic to find out the starting date and time of the next series and to sign up.

Fees and Insurance

Fees are \$70 per session. The total cost for the program is \$420 (6 sessions). Payment is due at each visit. Whether or not and how much your insurance plan covers this service depends on your insurance benefits. Our front desk staff can assist you in finding out the extent of your insurance coverage for this service.

Remember to bring your PAP equipment and sleep log to every session.



Stanford Sleep Disorders Clinic provides comprehensive, multidisciplinary sleep medicine services for adults and children across lifespan. We are committed to promote health through excellence and innovation in patient care, education and research.

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Sleep Improvement Program with Positive Airway Pressure (PAP) Therapy

Sleep Disorders Clinic



Sleep Apnea (aka Sleep-Disordered Breathing, Sleep-Related Breathing Disorder)

Sleep apnea is a sleep state-specific disorder that results from airway collapse or increased resistance. Sleep fragmentation, frequent waking, oxygen desaturation and non-restorative sleep are the most common adverse effects of this condition. Daytime symptoms may include fatigue, sleepiness, negative mood, cognitive decrement (poor attention, memory), and diminished feeling of well-being.

Untreated sleep apnea is associated with increased risks for high blood pressure, heart diseases and stroke. Emerging evidence from recent research showed an association between sleep apnea and inflammatory processes and metabolic dysfunction.

Sleep apnea is a common disorder afflicting both adults and children. It is treatable and there are several treatment options. Positive airway pressure (PAP) is currently the most prescribed treatment. PAP therapy works by providing a mechanical splint, via pressurized air through a nasal mask, to hold the upper airway open.

While PAP brings rapid elimination of sleep-disordered breathing, 30-40% of afflicted patients have difficulty tolerating this therapy. Published studies indicated the first month of PAP therapy is crucial for treatment adherence in the long term. Patients who have a difficult adjustment to this therapy early on are more likely to discontinue this treatment or use it less consistently, thus, less likely to achieve restorative sleep.

Patients who have the greatest difficulty tolerating PAP therapy are those whose sleep apnea severity is mild to moderate, and who have a history of difficulty falling asleep or returning to sleep.

Common Obstacles in Using PAP

Patients who find PAP device uncomfortable or disrupting their sleep often feel frustrated, exhausted, overwhelmed and discouraged. Many may just give up.

Common problems include

- poor fit of the mask, air leak, mouth open
- nasal congestion, skin irritation, dry mouth
- claustrophobic feeling with the mask
- difficulty breathing out, stomach bloating
- other equipment related problems
- mask falling off, or unaware removal

Psychological barriers may include

- concern that wearing PAP may disturb sleep more or disrupt bed partner's sleep
- restricted freedom in movement
- perceive that this therapy is incompatible with self-image or lifestyle
- doubting the benefits of PAP
- effort required to use the device

This Treatment Program is for Patients...

- Who are brand new to PAP therapy and would like specialists' guidance to more efficiently address technical problems and acclimate to this therapy.
- Who have recently started PAP therapy and are having difficulty getting comfortable sleeping with the device or find their sleep more disrupted because of wearing PAP.
- Who are considering alternative treatment (e.g. surgery, dental device) but would like to give PAP, the standard therapy for sleep apnea, a concerted try.
- Who have been trying to use PAP therapy for a longer period and are still not able to tolerate it or find themselves short on motivation to use



PAP, and would like specialists' support to improve their experience with this treatment.

Goals of the Program

1. To provide timely, high quality, coordinated, and efficient delivery of needed clinical management and education for optimizing PAP therapy.
2. To improve sleep quality and quantity, and teach patients to become better sleepers.

Features of the Program

- Frequent contact, longer visit and greater access. Weekly sessions allow patients more opportunities to work with the doctors than usual individual appointments.
- Multi-component integrated interventions based on sleep medicine, mind-body, health psychology and cognitive-behavioral disciplines.
 - Equipment/technical support, and education on mask fit and proper equipment operation to achieve maximum comfort
 - Education on sleep health and on management of sleep apnea
 - Motivation enhancement for health behavior change
 - Cognitive behavioral techniques to address insomnia and to remove obstacles to treatment adherence
 - Opportunities to learn through listening to doctors advise other patients
 - Opportunities for patients to give mutual support and learning from each other

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Getting the needed guidance and intensive support in the early weeks of using PAP therapy can increase your success and efficiency to sleeping better and feeling better.