

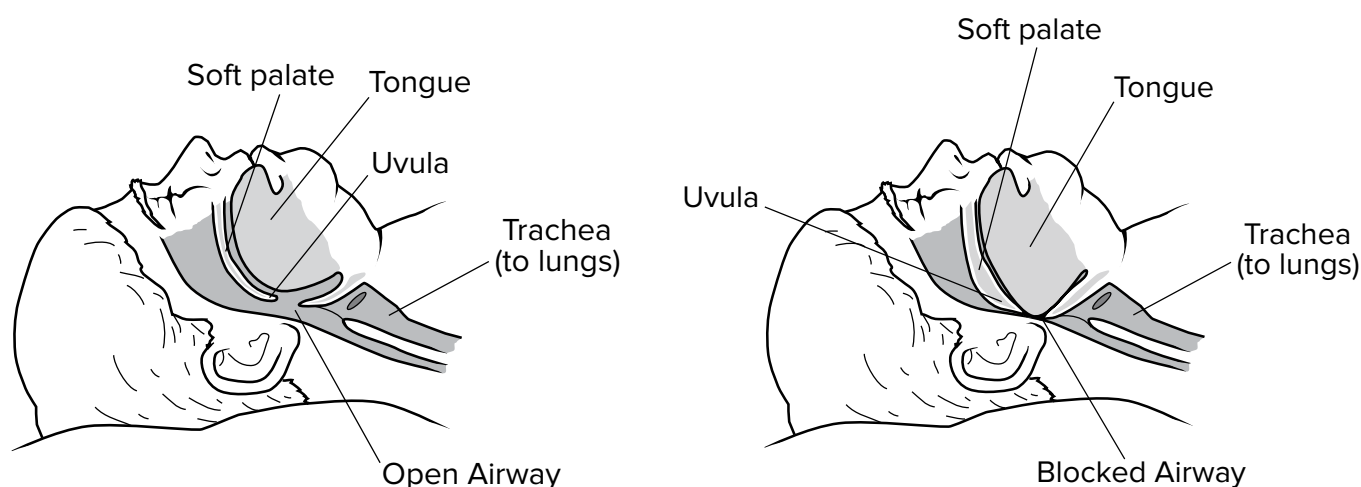
Care after Sedation If You Have Sleep Apnea



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

You either have or are at risk for having a type of sleep apnea known as obstructive sleep apnea or OSA.

Sleep apnea occurs when a person stops breathing for a short time while sleeping. The muscles around the tongue and throat hold them in place to keep the airway open, so a person can breathe during sleep. If you have **obstructive sleep apnea**, these muscles relax during sleep causing the tongue or throat tissues to block or limit the flow of air to your lungs.



After sedation, OSA can become more severe due to:

- The medicine given for anesthesia or sedation
- Pain medicine
- Inflammation of the airway caused by a breathing tube that may have been used during your surgery or procedure.

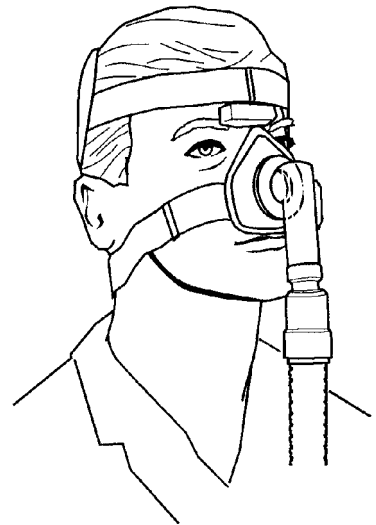
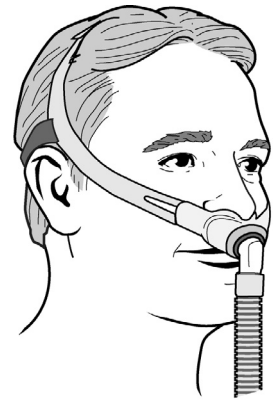
If you are not already using treatment for sleep apnea

Here are some precautions to take to help keep your airway open while sleeping if you are not currently being treated for sleep apnea.

- Sleep or nap with your head elevated with several pillows or while you are in a reclining chair.
- Sleep on your side. Sleep apnea is much worse when lying on your back. If your doctor has given you specific instructions after your surgery or procedure of positions to sleep in or to avoid, always follow those instructions first.
- Use pain medicines with caution as prescribed. Pain medicine can cause your breathing to become shallow.
- If you have been told that you are at risk for sleep apnea, you should talk to your primary care doctor about being tested. You may need treatment to prevent other health problems.

If you use a CPAP machine for sleep apnea

- Be sure to use your CPAP every time you sleep. It is important to use your CPAP even during naps after a procedure or surgery. Anesthesia and pain medicine can cause your breathing to become shallow. This may worsen your airway obstruction and lower your oxygen levels.
- After leaving the hospital, ask your family members to remind you to use your CPAP machine while resting. They may also notice you snoring, gasping or choking while you sleep. They should wake you right away, so you may put on your CPAP machine.
- Based on the type of procedure or surgery you had and the mask you use, you may need to temporarily use a different type of mask. Please call your home care company that provides your CPAP equipment if you need a different mask.
- If you have any problems using your CPAP machine, especially new problems after your procedure or surgery, call the doctor you see for your sleep apnea.



Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at **614-293-3707** or e-mail **health-info@osu.edu**.