

# HEALTH TIPS FOR WINTER, 2009/2010

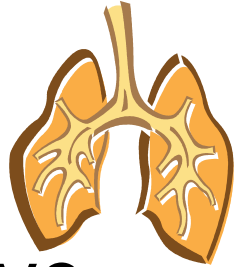
## SLEEP APNEA



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# OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA

- The muscles of the airway collapse.
- Breathing continues but air cannot move through the air passage.
- As a result, breathing stops as no air can get into the lungs causing oxygen levels in the blood to decrease.
- This can put a strain on the heart.



# WHAT CAUSES THE AIRWAY TO COLLAPSE?

- Extra tissue in the back of the airway such as large tonsils
- The tongue falling back, closing the airway
- Decrease in the tone of the muscles holding the airway open



**Normal Breathing**  
- Airway is open  
- Air flows freely to lungs



**Obstructive Sleep Apnea**  
- Airway collapses  
- Blocked air flow to lungs

# WHO GETS SLEEP APNEA?

- 4 in 100 middle-aged men
- 2 in 100 middle-aged women
- 95% are undiagnosed and untreated
- This can occur from 40 to 100 times a night.



# WHAT HAPPENS?

- The episode of sleep apnea ends when the person wakes up slightly, gasps for air and begins breathing again.
- This disturbs the normal sleep pattern causing daytime sleepiness, anxiety, irritability, poor concentration and impaired memory.



# TREATMENT

- Side sleeping instead of back sleeping.
- Oral device – jaw retainer keeps the airway open, preventing collapse.
- CPAP – continuous positive airway pressure delivers a small amount of air pressure through a mask during sleep.
- This air pressure keeps the airway open and is the most common treatment for sleep apnea.

