

 SOUND SLEEP HEALTH

Sleep Medicine Acronyms From APAP to Zzzz

We've compiled the most common (and not so common) sleep medicine acronyms in one simple E-Book.



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Sleep Medicine Acronyms (From APAP to Zzzz): Part 1, A-D



It can be frustrating trying to understand medical jargon of any kind. Sleep medicine acronyms are no exception.

Here is a series on abbreviations you are likely to encounter during your visits to a sleep specialist or sleep center.

This first section highlights terms that start with the letters A through D.

Sleep Medicine Acronyms (A-D)

A

AHI

Apnea Hypopnea Index. A metric used to measure the severity of sleep apnea. It is based on the total number (per hour) of complete obstructions (apnea) and partial obstructions (hypopnea) in breathing, expressed as an average. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)

-
- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)

APAP

Automatic Positive Airway Pressure *or* **Auto-Titrating Positive Airway Pressure** *or* **AutoPAP**. This therapy, used for treating sleep apnea, provides a preset range of therapeutic air pressure for the user. Learn more:

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[*Using Auto-CPAP \(APAP\) Therapy: It's not a set-and-forget option*](#)

- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)

ASV

Adaptive Servo Ventilation. This form of noninvasive ventilation is used to treat sleep apnea when it occurs in conjunction with other serious health problems. Learn more:

- [*Adaptive Servo Ventilation \(ASV\) and Central Sleep Apnea*](#)
- [*Central Sleep Apnea: Causes, Diagnosis, and Therapies*](#)

A.W.A.K.E.

Alert, Wakeful, and Keeping Energetic. There are A.W.A.K.E. support groups all over the United States which exist to help people with sleep apnea and other sleep disorders to succeed with therapy. Learn more:

- [Check out our new CPAP Support Group!](#)

B

BiPAP/BPAP

Bilevel Positive Airway Pressure. *BiPAP* is a trade name, whereas *BPAP* is a generic acronym. However, BiPAP is frequently used to refer to this kind of PAP therapy, which offers two modes of pressurized air: one for the incoming inhale (IPAP), and another for the outgoing exhale (EPAP). Learn more:

- [*Problems with CPAP: When is BiPAP therapy the best treatment?*](#)
- [*Central Sleep Apnea: Causes, Diagnosis, and Therapies*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)

BMI

Body Mass Index. This is the number derived from a formula using your height and weight measurements to determine whether you are overweight or obese. Learn more:

- [*Sleep Apnea and Weight Gain: Reasons and Answers*](#)
- [*The Role of Sleep and Weight Loss*](#)

C

CPAP

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure. This "gold standard" therapy for treating sleep apnea uses a single delivery of pressurized air to "splint open" the upper airway during sleep. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)

- [*How does a CPAP machine work?*](#)

CSA/CSAS

Central Sleep Apnea or Central Sleep Apnea Syndrome. Central sleep apnea is different from obstructive sleep apnea in that the failure to inhale and exhale adequately during sleep is caused by faulty mechanisms in the brain (the central nervous system). Learn more:

- [*Central Sleep Apnea: Causes, Diagnosis, and Therapies*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)

CSB/CSR

Cheyne-Stokes Breathing or Cheyne-Stokes Respiration. A distinctive "crescendo-decrescendo" breathing pattern (also referred to as "periodic breathing") found in people with central sleep apnea. It is common in patients with congestive heart failure. Learn more:

- [*Central Sleep Apnea: Causes, Diagnosis, and Therapies*](#)
- [*Adaptive Servo Ventilation \(ASV\) and Central Sleep Apnea*](#)

D

DME

Durable Medical Equipment. This refers to all the different components of sleep apnea therapies (PAP machine, mask, filters, tubing, chin supports, etc.). **DME** is also frequently used to refer to the sleep specialists who provide support for patients using DME. Learn more:

- [*When To Get New CPAP Supplies \(Masks, Tubing, Filters & Machine\)*](#)

- [*Check out our new CPAP Support Group!*](#)
- [*"How do I clean my CPAP?"*](#)
- [*The Best CPAP Mask: Pros and Cons of 3 Different Styles*](#)
- [*How does a CPAP machine work?*](#)

DSPD/DSPS

Delayed Sleep Phase Disorder/Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome. The *syndrome* refers to circadian rhythms that run 2 to 4 hours later than average; people with DSPS consider themselves "night owls." The *disorder* refers to those who suffer significant problems living with delayed sleep phase, such as job stress and relationship strain. Learn more:

- [*Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome \(DSPS\) and Teenagers*](#)
- [*Blue light therapy for sleep disorders: Insomnia, DSPS, and ASPS*](#)
- [*Insomnia vs Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome*](#)
- [*Burning the midnight oil and creativity*](#)
- [*Phototherapy and Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome \(DSPS\)*](#)

Sleep Medicine Acronyms (From APAP to Zzzz): Part 2, E-M



This second section highlights terms that start with the letters E through M.

See also:

- [Sleep Medicine Acronyms \(From APAP to Zzzz\): Part 1, A-D](#)

Sleep Medicine Acronyms (E-M)

E

ECG/EKG

Electrocardiogram. A medical device which measures heart rhythm, rates, and activity. Using ECG during a sleep study helps to confirm sleep stages, tracks cardiac activity during sleep, and records the presence of arrhythmias. Sensors are applied to the chest and ribcage.

EDS

Excessive Daytime Sleepiness. The experience of extreme fatigue during waking hours which can interfere with the activities of daily living. Learn more:

- [*Hypersomnolence: Is there such a thing as too much sleep?*](#)
- [*What is the Maintenance of Wakefulness Test?*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: Signs and symptoms of hypersomnolence*](#)
- [*Are you sleeping all the time? \(Reasons, Causes and Solutions\)*](#)
- [*Idiopathic hypersomnia: feeling tired all the time*](#)

EEG

Electroencephalogram. A medical device which measures brain wave activity through the application of electrodes to the scalp. Using ECG helps to confirm sleep stages, identifies seizure activity during sleep, and records the presence of neurological dysfunction during sleep. Learn more:

- [*Central Sleep Apnea: Causes, Diagnosis, and Therapies*](#)
- [*What is REM sleep?*](#)

EMG

Electromyogram. A medical device which measures muscle activity. Using EMG helps to confirm sleep stages and identifies key symptoms for specific sleep disorders. Sensors are applied to the legs and chin and sometimes the arms. Learn more:

- [*What is a Parasomnia? Things that go BUMP in the night!*](#)

- [*Restless Leg Syndrome: Causes and Symptoms*](#)

- [*What is REM sleep?*](#)

EOG

Electro-oculogram. A medical device which measures eye movement. Using EOG helps to confirm sleep stages. Sensors are applied to the face near the eyes. Learn more:

- [*What is REM sleep?*](#)

EPAP

Expiratory Positive Airway Pressure. While using PAP therapy, EPAP is the measurement of positive airway pressure that is applied during exhalation. In CPAP, EPAP is the same with both inhale and exhale; with BiPAP, the EPAP is delivered at a lower pressure. Learn more:

- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)
- [*Problems with CPAP: When is BiPAP therapy the best treatment?*](#)

ESS

Epworth Sleepiness Scale. A questionnaire that all sleep patients fill out which helps to assign severity to their overall sense of sleepiness during the day.

G

GERD

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease. Also commonly referred to as *acid reflex* or *heartburn*, this is a condition in which the valve that separates the esophagus from the trachea—to prevent food particles and stomach acid from entering the airway—loses its tone or otherwise malfunctions. Learn more:

- [*Insomnia and food allergies = food-allergy insomnia*](#)
- [*Peristalsis and Sleep: How both work in tandem with circadian rhythms*](#)
- [*Acid Reflux and Sleep*](#)
- [*Food and Sleep: What and when we eat matters to the body clock*](#)

H

HSAT

Home Sleep Apnea Test. This portable sleep test is used in the home for one or more nights to ascertain whether a patient is at high risk for sleep apnea. It is also referred to as HST. Learn more:

- [*What is the best sleep study for my problem?*](#)

I

ICSD-3

International Classification of Sleep Disorders, Third Edition. This is the authoritative clinical reference used for diagnosing sleep disorders.

IPAP

Inspiratory Positive Airway Pressure. While using PAP therapy, IPAP is the measurement of positive airway pressure that is applied during inhalation. In CPAP, IPAP is the same with both inhale and exhale; with BiPAP, the IPAP is delivered at a higher pressure. Learn more:

- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)
- [*Problems with CPAP: When is BiPAP therapy the best treatment?*](#)

M

MMA

Maxillomandibular Advancement. This refers to technology applied by certain oral devices used to treat snoring, upper airway resistance, and obstructive sleep apnea. These mouthpieces advance the lower jaw as the wearer sleeps, allowing the airway to keep its tone and preventing its collapse. Learn more:

- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)
- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)

MSLT

Multiple Sleep Latency Test. This refers to a specific kind of sleep test which is used to identify and diagnose certain kinds of hypersomnias, such as narcolepsy. Learn more:

- [*What is a Multiple Sleep Latency Test \(MSLT\)?*](#)
- [*What is Narcolepsy? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Diagnosis\)*](#)
- [*What is Cataplexy and How is it Treated?*](#)

- [*Idiopathic hypersomnia: feeling tired all the time*](#)

MWT

Maintenance of Wakefulness Test. This refers to a specific kind of sleep test which is used as a public safety precaution to assess daytime sleepiness in workers who operate vehicles or heavy machinery. It is also used to measure effectiveness of PAP therapy in new sleep apnea patients. Learn more:

- [*What is the Maintenance of Wakefulness Test*](#)
- [*Sleep Apnea and Truck Drivers*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)

Sleep Medicine Acronyms (From APAP to Zzzz): Part 3, N-R



This third section highlights terms that start with the letters N through R.

See also:

- [Sleep Medicine Acronyms \(From APAP to Zzzz\): Part 1, A-D](#)
- [Sleep Medicine Acronyms \(From APAP to Zzzz\): Part 2, E-M](#)

Sleep Medicine Acronyms (N-R)

N

NIV/NIPPV

Noninvasive Ventilation *or* **Noninvasive Positive Pressure Ventilation**. This refers to forms of respiratory therapy that people use by way of a mask delivery system to help them to breathe better independently. (By comparison, a *ventilator* is a respiratory device, inserted into the trachea, which breathes *for* someone.) PAP therapy (CPAP, BiPAP, APAP) and ASV all qualify as forms of NIV. Learn more:

- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)
- [*How does a CPAP machine work?*](#)
- [*Problems with CPAP: When is BiPAP therapy the best treatment?*](#)
- [*Using Auto-CPAP \(APAP\) Therapy: It's not a set-and-forget option*](#)
- [*Adaptive Servo Ventilation \(ASV\) and Central Sleep Apnea*](#)

NPSG/PSG

Nocturnal Polysomnogram *or Polysomnogram*. This is an overnight sleep study which takes place in the sleep clinic or lab environment; its purpose is to identify and diagnose sleep disorders. Learn more:

- [*What is the best sleep study for my problem?*](#)
- [*How much does a sleep study cost? \(Prices and Rates\)*](#)
- [*Does Insurance Pay for Sleep Studies? \(Coverage, Costs, and Rates\)*](#)

NREM

NonREM sleep. The 3 stages of sleep when rapid-eye movement does not occur. These include sleep stages 1, 2, and 3 of the sleep cycle. Learn more:

- [*Circadian Rhythm Disorder and the Sleep Wake Cycle*](#)
- [*What is REM sleep?*](#)

O

OAT

Oral Appliance Therapy. This refers to the various kinds of dental appliances that can be used to treat snoring, upper airway resistance, or sleep apnea. Some are maxillomandibular advancement (MMA) devices, while others restrict the movement of the tongue in order to keep the upper airway clear. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)

OHS

Obesity Hypoventilation Syndrome. Also known as *Pickwickian syndrome*, OHS is a sleep-breathing disorder common to obese people, in which failure to breathe deeply or rapidly enough results in dangerously low blood oxygen levels and high carbon dioxide levels in the blood, especially during sleep. Learn more:

- [*Sleep Apnea and Weight Gain: Reasons and Answers*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)

OSA/OSAS/OSAHS

Obstructive Sleep Apnea or Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome or Obstructive Sleep Apnea Hypoventilation Syndrome. This refers to a sleep-breathing disorder in which the upper airway becomes partially or completely blocked for at least 10 seconds while sleeping, leading to struggles to get adequate oxygen into the bloodstream. Those who suffer at least 5 or more of these pauses during sleep are diagnosed with OSA. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)
-

- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)

P

PAP

Positive Airway Pressure. This therapy, used for treating sleep apnea, delivers preset ranges of therapeutic air pressure for the user. It includes CPAP, APAP, BiPAP, and ASV therapies. Learn more:

- [*FAST FACTS: THE ABCS OF POSITIVE AIRWAY PRESSURE*](#)
- [*How does a CPAP machine work?*](#)
- [*Problems with CPAP: When is BiPAP therapy the best treatment?*](#)
- [*Using Auto-CPAP \(APAP\) Therapy: It's not a set-and-forget option*](#)
- [*Adaptive Servo Ventilation \(ASV\) and Central Sleep Apnea*](#)

PLMS/PLMD

Periodic Leg Movements of Sleep or Periodic Leg Movement Disorder. *Periodic leg movements of sleep* can occur in most anyone. However, when they happen frequently in a pattern and are not the result of arousals due to apnea, they can turn into a *disorder*: the pattern interrupts sleep, leading to sleep deprivation, excessive daytime sleepiness, or other concerns. PLMD is similar to RLS, but it only happens during sleep, whereas RLS takes place during the day or at bedtime. Learn more:

- [*Restless Leg Syndrome: Causes and Symptoms*](#)

R

RBD

REM Behavior Disorder. A parasomnia in which the brain fails to paralyze the body's muscles during REM sleep, allowing the person (potentially and dangerously) to act out dreams. Learn more:

- [*What is a Parasomnia? Things that go BUMP in the night!*](#)
- [*What is REM sleep?*](#)

RDI

Respiratory Disturbance Index. A metric used to measure the severity of sleep apnea. It is based on the total number (per hour) of complete obstructions (apnea), partial obstructions (hypopnea) in breathing, and respiratory-effort related arousals (RERA), expressed as an average. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)

REM

Rapid Eye Movement. This stage of sleep is considered "paradoxical" because the brain is often as active, or more active, at this time than during wake. It is identified by distinctive patterns of eye movement that occur during this stage. Learn more:

- [*What is REM sleep?*](#)

RERA

Respiratory Effort Related Arousals. These are partial obstructions to the upper

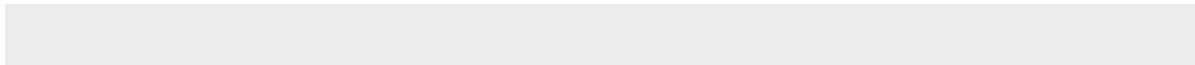
airway that occur during sleep but which do not last as long as apneas and which may not result in a reduction in blood oxygen levels. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)

RLS

Restless Leg Syndrome. This is a movement disorder of sleep which can also exhibit symptoms during the day. The symptoms include unusual twitching, spasming, or other unpleasant sensation in the legs (and sometimes the arms) that may require movement or massage to relieve. RLS happens during bedtime and can lead to delays in falling asleep. Learn more:

- [*Restless Leg Syndrome: Causes and Symptoms*](#)



Sleep Medicine Acronyms (From APAP to Zzzz): Part 4, S-Z



This fourth section highlights terms that start with the letters S through Z.

See also:

- [Sleep Medicine Acronyms \(From APAP to Zzzz\): Part 1, A-D](#)
- [Sleep Medicine Acronyms \(From APAP to Zzzz\): Part 2, E-M](#)
- [Sleep Medicine Acronyms \(From APAP to Zzzz\): Part 3, N-R](#)

Sleep Medicine Acronyms (S-Z)

S

SBD/SRBD/SDB

Sleep Breathing Disorder/Sleep Related Breathing Disorder/Sleep Disordered Breathing. This term references sleep disorders which impair respiratory system processes during sleep. They include snoring, upper airway resistance, sleep apnea, and hypoventilation. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Apnea? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Risks\)*](#)
- [*Central Sleep Apnea: Causes, Diagnosis, and Therapies*](#)
- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)
- [*When is my husband's snoring more than annoying?*](#)

SL

Sleep Latency. This measures the length of time that it takes to fall sleep, usually in stage 1 nonREM sleep, though sleep may also be initiated in other sleep stages. It is SL that is critically examined during the sleep test known as the MSLT. Learn more:

- [*How much sleep do I need?*](#)
- [*What is Insomnia? \(Types and Causes\)*](#)
- [*Insomnia vs Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome*](#)
- [*Circadian Rhythm Disorder and the Sleep Wake Cycle*](#)
- [*What is a Multiple Sleep Latency Test \(MSLT\)?*](#)

SO

Sleep Onset. This is the moment you fall asleep, usually in stage 1 nonREM sleep.

SOREMP

Sleep Onset REM Period. A REM period that occurs at sleep onset. This is atypical, as most people transition from wakefulness to stage 1 nonREM sleep. The presence of SOREMPs during an MSLT or "nap test" indicates the potential for a diagnosis of narcolepsy. Learn more:

- [What is REM sleep?](#)
- [What is a Multiple Sleep Latency Test \(MSLT\)?](#)
- [What is Narcolepsy? \(Signs, Symptoms, and Diagnosis\)](#)

SPO₂

Blood Oxygen Saturation. This is expressed as a chemical equation: The *S* stands for *saturation*, the *P* stands for *pulse*, and the *O₂* stands for *oxygen*. A fingertip sensor known as a *pulse oximeter* is used during a sleep study to measure trends in both blood oxygen saturation and pulse throughout the test.

SWS

Slow Wave Sleep. This is another name for stage 3 nonREM sleep, delta sleep, or deep sleep. Brain waves during slow wave sleep show a distinctive delta wave pattern. It is during this stage of sleep that the brain releases growth hormone into the bloodstream to help heal the body at the cellular level.

U

UARS

Upper Airway Resistance Syndrome. A form of sleep-breathing disorder in which there are increases in resistance to airflow in the upper airway during sleep; this leads to brief arousals and daytime fatigue, even in the absence of apneas. Learn more:

- [When is my husband's snoring more than annoying?](#)

-
- [*FAST FACTS: SLEEP APNEA vs SNORING*](#)

W

WASO

Wake After Sleep Onset. The total amount of time spent awake after sleep has been initiated. WASO is a marker of *sleep fragmentation*, in which people fall asleep, then awaken frequently all night during and between each sleep cycle. A high WASO index on a sleep study may reveal the cause of someone's excessive daytime sleepiness or confirm the presence of other sleep disorders. Learn more:

- [*What Is Sleep Debt and Why Should I Avoid It?*](#)
 - [*How much sleep do I need?*](#)
 - [*What is Insomnia? \(Types and Causes\)*](#)
 - [*FAST FACTS: Signs and symptoms of hypersomnolence*](#)
 - [*FAST FACTS: Signs that you might have sleep apnea*](#)
-

Want to Speak With US?

Now that you're familiar with the sleep medicine jargon,
reach out to us to request a free 10 minute phone
consultation with one of our Clinical Sleep Specialists

[Request a call back today!](#)