



Sleep apnea occurs at any stage in life. We can attribute increased rates of pediatric sleep apnea with childhood obesity, large tonsils or adenoids, and, for some, a narrow upper airway. The following are contributing factors to sleep apnea in children:

- Enlarged tonsils
- Weight gain and obesity
- Nasal allergies
- GERD (gastro esophageal reflux disorder)
- Underlying problems such as craniofacial abnormalities, cystic fibrosis, and various medical disorders.

Common symptoms of sleep apnea in children:

- Noisy breathing and mouth breathing
- Decreased performance in school
- Difficulty in learning
- Occasional daytime sleepiness
- Excessive morning thirst
- Hyperactivity
- Aggressiveness, shyness, moodiness, irritability
- Snoring
- Restless sleep
- Nightmares
- Profuse sweating
- Frequent night time awakenings
- Sleeping in odd positions
- Bed-wetting
- Morning headaches
- Frequent upper airway infection, ear infection
- Sinusitis
- Failure to thrive
- Depression
- Attention span problems

Common treatments of sleep apnea in children:

1. Adenotonsillectomy
2. Palate Expansion with a rapid maxillary expander made by a dentist.
3. CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure)

If you suspect that your child is suffering from sleep apnea, contact your Primary Care Physician to refer your child for an attended overnight sleep study.

Additional resources

- Connect to our Web site at kp.org to access health and drug encyclopedias, interactive programs, health classes, and more.
- Contact your Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center or Department for health Information, programs, and other resources.