

# SDB and Stroke

The term "sleep-disordered breathing" (SDB) refers to a condition where apnea's (when you stop breathing) and hypopnea's (when you have shallow breathing for a long period of time) are present during sleep. Approximately one in every five adults have SDB.

The majority of patients with stroke and transient ischemic attack (TIA) have sleep disordered breathing. This is mainly because stroke patients with SDB have worse functional outcomes and therefore investigation of stroke should include screening for SDB.

People suffering from SDB experience a number of symptoms that may result in a stroke, these include:

- Repetitive drops in nocturnal blood oxygen levels caused by SDB, which can result in intermittent hypoxia.
- Sleep fragmentation resulting in hyper-sympathetic activity.

Stroke has the potential to cause SDB; either by central mechanisms resulting in central sleep apnea or by affecting muscle tone resulting in obstructive sleep apnea (where you body still tries to breathe, but can't due to an airway obstruction).

**If you would like us to conduct a sleep test in the comfort of your own home, please ask your doctor for a referral.**

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