

# Understanding Task Force Draft Recommendations

This fact sheet explains the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force's (Task Force) draft recommendation statement on screening for obstructive sleep apnea. It also tells you how you can send comments about the draft recommendation to the Task Force. Comments may be submitted from March 29, 2022, to April 25, 2022. The Task Force welcomes your comments.

## Screening for Obstructive Sleep Apnea

The Task Force issued a **draft recommendation statement** on *Screening for Obstructive Sleep Apnea*.

The Task Force found there is not enough evidence to make a recommendation for or against screening in people who do not have signs or symptoms of sleep apnea.

This draft recommendation applies to adults 18 and older who do not have signs or symptoms of sleep apnea. It also applies to adults who don't realize they have symptoms of sleep apnea and do not report their symptoms to their healthcare professional. Symptoms of sleep apnea include snoring, excessive daytime sleepiness, difficulty paying attention or remembering things, mood changes, and gasping or choking during sleep.

### Facts About Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is an issue that can negatively affect people's health and well-being. Untreated sleep apnea is linked to negative health effects such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes, and people with severe cases may be more likely to die.

People at increased risk include men, postmenopausal women, older adults ages 40–70, people with overweight, and people who have certain physical features that can affect their breathing. Black, Native American, and Latino populations also have higher rates of sleep apnea compared to White people, which may be related to higher rates of obesity and other health issues also reported in these groups.

### Screening for Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Screening for sleep apnea can be done by answering questions on a questionnaire about symptoms you may have of sleep apnea. Your primary care clinician may also provide additional information on the questionnaire about your medical history or physical exam results. People who are screened and suspected to have sleep apnea will need to do follow-up tests, such as an overnight sleep test, to confirm their diagnosis. However, the Task Force did not find enough evidence to support using any screening tools to identify sleep apnea in adults without signs or symptoms.

### Potential Benefits and Harms of Screening for Obstructive Sleep Apnea

The Task Force looked at the evidence to determine if screening for sleep apnea improves people's health. There was not enough evidence on the benefits and harms of screening adults without signs or symptoms, so the Task Force is calling for more research.

Anyone who has concerns about their sleeping or thinks they may have symptoms of sleep apnea should talk to their healthcare professional so they can receive the care they need.



#### What is obstructive sleep apnea?

Obstructive sleep apnea is a health condition in which during sleep, part or all of a person's airway gets blocked, causing them to repeatedly stop breathing.

## The Draft Recommendation on Screening for Obstructive Sleep Apnea: What Does It Mean?

Here is the Task Force's draft recommendation on screening for sleep apnea. It is based on the quality and strength of the evidence about the potential benefits and harms of screening for this purpose. It is also based on the size of the potential benefits and harms. Task Force recommendation grades are explained in the box at the end of this fact sheet.

When the Task Force issues an **I Statement**, it means that there is not enough evidence to recommend for or against the preventive service.

Before you send comments to the Task Force, you may want to read the [draft recommendation statement](#). The recommendation statement explains the evidence the Task Force reviewed and how it decided on the grade. An [evidence document](#) provides more detail about the scientific studies the Task Force reviewed.

**1** The USPSTF concludes that the **current evidence is insufficient** to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening for **obstructive sleep apnea** in the **general adult population**.  
**(I Statement)**

### Notes

**1** **current evidence is insufficient**  
The Task Force did not find enough information to make a recommendation.

#### **obstructive sleep apnea**

Health condition in which during sleep, part or all of a person's airway gets blocked, causing them to repeatedly stop breathing.

#### **general adult population**

Adults 18 and older who do not have signs or symptoms of sleep apnea (such as snoring or excessive daytime sleepiness) and who do not have another health condition that could cause obstructive sleep apnea.


# Screening for Sleep Apnea


## What is the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force?

The Task Force is an independent, non-federal, volunteer group of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine. The Task Force works to improve the health of people nationwide by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services, such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medicines. The recommendations apply to people with no signs or symptoms of the disease being discussed.

To develop a recommendation statement, Task Force members consider the best available science and research on a topic. For each topic, the Task Force posts draft documents for public comment, including a **draft recommendation statement**. All comments are reviewed and considered in developing the final recommendation statement. To learn more, visit the **Task Force website**.

[Click Here to Learn More About Sleep Apnea](#)

 **Sleep Apnea**  
(National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health)

 **Obstructive Sleep Apnea – Adults**  
(MedlinePlus)

USPSTF Recommendation Grades	
Grade	Definition
<b>A</b>	Recommended.
<b>B</b>	Recommended.
<b>C</b>	Recommendation depends on the patient's situation.
<b>D</b>	Not recommended.
<b>I statement</b>	There is not enough evidence to make a recommendation.

## [Click Here to Comment on the Draft Recommendation](#)



The Task Force welcomes comments on this draft recommendation.



Comments must be received between March 29, 2022 and April 25, 2022.



All comments will be considered for use in writing final recommendations.