

## What's the connection between Down Syndrome and Obstructive Sleep Apnea?

### What is obstructive sleep apnea?

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) occurs when an individual stops breathing (apnea) during sleep due to an obstruction in the airway. The "apneic" episode can occur for several seconds or minutes at a time. For many people, mostly children, the obstruction is caused by enlarged tonsils and adenoids. Obstructions are also common with individuals who are overweight or have a large neck size.

### What's the connection with Down Syndrome?

Individuals with Down Syndrome have physical characteristics that can increase their risk of OSA.

*"Children and Adults with down Syndrome are more susceptible to this because their upper airway tissues tend to be larger and more crowded. Their flattened mid-face, narrowed nasopharyngeal area, low tone of the muscles of the upper airway, enlarged adenoids and/or tonsils puts them at high risk for OSA."* (Down Syndrome Research Foundation)

If you take low muscle tone and pair it with a larger tongue, hypertrophy of tonsils and adenoids and/or obesity, the chance of having OSA increases.

### What are the effects of untreated OSA?

Some side effects include:

- ⇒ Hypertension
- ⇒ Heart Disease
- ⇒ Stroke
- ⇒ Memory Loss
- ⇒ Depression

### How is someone tested for OSA?

By visiting a sleep lab for an overnight sleep study, we can test an individual to see whether they have OSA and if so, how severe.

Sleep Studies are covered under OHIP, with a valid health card. We require a signed referral from a Physician or Nurse Practitioner. After a sleep study, patients will meet with one of our Sleep Medicine Specialists for a consultation to review the results.

For more information, please visit [www.accqsleeplabs.com](http://www.accqsleeplabs.com).

### Accq Sleep Lab Locations

KW Sleep Lab	Paris Sleep Lab	Owen Sound Sleep Lab
295-180 King Street S.	139 Grand River Street N.	945 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue East
Waterloo, Ontario	Paris, Ontario	Owen Sound, Ontario
N2J 1P8	N3L 2M4	N4K 2K8
Tel: 519-745-2621	Tel: 519-442-6389	Tel: 519-371-5217

ADP Registered Facilities & Physicians

**Dr. E.H. Tadross | Dr. C.W. Galarraga | Dr. C. Ogugua | Dr. A.K. Nagpal | Dr. J. Nemni**

*Members of the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), allowing our physicians to perform consultations remotely*