

## Am I at Risk?

- Do you snore loudly?
- Do you often feel sleepy or foggy while awake?
- Has someone told you that you stop breathing, choke, or gasp in your sleep?
- Are you overweight?

If you answered **YES**, you have symptoms that suggest you may have sleep apnea.

## What Is Sleep Apnea?

When we breathe, air enters the nose or mouth and travels through the airway to the lungs. Throat muscles typically keep the airway entrance open, but if you have sleep apnea, they fail to do that during sleep and breathing stops completely for a few seconds—up to a minute or more.

This can recur dozens of times during each hour of sleep. People with sleep apnea wake up repeatedly, then breathing resumes. They seldom remember waking up, but are aware that they slept poorly.

## You Can Screen Yourself

You can find out more about your risk for sleep apnea—and other sleep disorders—at [www.RailroaderSleep.org](http://www.RailroaderSleep.org) and by filling out the [Anonymous Sleep Disorders Screening Tool](http://www.railroadersleep.org/screen-yourself/overview) at [www.railroadersleep.org/screen-yourself/overview](http://www.railroadersleep.org/screen-yourself/overview). It takes only 10-15 minutes to complete. When you exit the screen, any information you entered is automatically deleted.

Print your results and discuss them with your healthcare provider. This person may refer you to a sleep specialist for further evaluation.

## What Treatment Options Are Available?

Usually covered by insurance, you may need to take part in a home or lab sleep study. If you are diagnosed with sleep apnea, any of the following treatment options and lifestyle changes may help:

- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine
- Dental device to open airway
- Avoiding alcohol
- Quitting smoking
- Losing weight
- Sleeping on your side instead of your back

Treatment can help you sleep better, feel better while awake, and perform well in your safety-critical railroad job.