
Editor's corner

Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy has revolutionized the treatment of patients with sleep apnea-hypopnea syndrome (SAHS) and has virtually replaced tracheostomy, which used to be the treatment of choice for moderately severe to severe patients with SAHS. CPAP treatment can dramatically improve the quality of life of patients and transform a somnolent, sluggish individual into an energetic and productive person with a positive outlook towards life. Considerable controversy, however, remains regarding compliance and outcome of CPAP therapy. Long-term consequences and effect of CPAP treatment on the natural history of SAHS also remain undetermined. Many patients stop using CPAP after a few weeks to a few months, whereas others continue to use it suboptimally, wearing the mask for 3–4 h instead of 6–8 h during sleep. We do not know the outcome of suboptimal use and we do not also know the exact compliance rate. This is, therefore, a fruitful area for research and discussion.

Dr Richard Berry from Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Gainesville, FL, USA, brings this topic into perspective in his editorial in this issue of the journal. In two other articles, Dr Parish and co-investigators discuss compliance with CPAP in elderly patients with SAHS, and Dr Rosenthal and collaborators discuss CPAP therapy in patients with mild SAHS with special emphasis on implementation and treatment outcome. We hope that the editorial and the articles dealing with CPAP compliance and outcome will generate lively interest and discussion of this timely topic.

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