

Understanding your test results

Are you curious about the results of your sleep study, but confused by the technical terms and medical language? This guide aims to help you understand your sleep study results before you discuss them with your doctor.



What is AHI?

Your AHI is a number that shows how severe your sleep apnea is. It counts the average number of respiratory disturbances (apneas or hypopneas) you have each hour.

An apnea is when you stop breathing for 10 seconds or longer. A hypopnea is a partial loss of breath for 10 seconds or more and is as serious as an apnea.

AHI	Rating
<5	Normal (no sleep Apnea)
5-15	Mild Sleep Apnea
15-30	Moderate Sleep Apnea
>30	Severe Sleep Apnea

Body movement and sleep disruptions



There are other events that could indicate a sleep disorder and should be considered for diagnosis. For example, RERAs (respiratory effort related arousals) are events that affect breathing and quality of sleep but are different to apneas or hypopneas. Arousals or excessive leg movement will also be assessed during a sleep study.

Sleep stages



Sleep apnea can cause arousals that prevent you from reaching the deepest state of sleep, so you wake up feeling tired and may feel like dozing off in the daytime. Sleep specialists will be able to detect which of your sleep stages are disrupted by analyzing the data provided by brain monitors.

Body position



Your body position can also influence sleep apnea. A sleep study will show how much time you sleep on your stomach (prone), your back and on each side.

Oxygen saturation



Pauses in breathing during sleep mean you're not getting the necessary oxygen into your bloodstream.

Should oxygen saturation fall below 95%, your body and brain are being starved of oxygen, which can lead to brain damage and cardiovascular issues. In cases of severe sleep apnea, oxygen levels can fall to 60% or lower during sleep.

Therapy and treatment

According to the results of your sleep study, your doctor or sleep specialist could recommend another sleep study or a course of CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) therapy to give you the airflow you need for normal breathing and a good night's sleep.

