

Do oropharyngeal exercises reduce sleepiness in people suffering from sleep apnoea?

Clinical Question	What are the benefits and harms of myofunctional therapy (oropharyngeal exercises) for the treatment of obstructive sleep apnoea?
Bottom Line	<p>Compared to sham therapy, waiting list or standard medical treatment, in adults, myofunctional therapy may improve daytime sleepiness and sleep quality in the short term.</p> <p>Compared to CPAP, myofunctional therapy may result in little to no difference in daytime sleepiness, may increase AHI and may result in little to no difference in snoring frequency and snoring intensity.</p> <p>Compared to CPAP plus myofunctional therapy, myofunctional therapy alone may result in little to no difference in daytime sleepiness, may increase AHI and may result in little to no difference in snoring frequency and snoring intensity.</p> <p>Compared to respiratory exercises plus nasal dilator strip, myofunctional therapy may result in little to no difference in daytime sleepiness, probably increases sleep quality slightly and may result in little to no difference in AHI.</p> <p>In children, compared to nasal washing alone, adding myofunctional therapy may result in little to no difference in AHI.</p>
Caveat	<p>None of the studies looked at morbidity (including accidents and cardiovascular diseases) and mortality, or quality of life. The length of the interventions and follow-up periods of the included studies were short (less than four months). Therefore, it is not clear whether potential beneficial effects of the treatment will endure in the medium and long term, and whether compliance with the treatment will persist.</p>
Context	<p>Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) is a sleeping disorder. People with OSA have periods where their breathing stops during the night. OSA can cause snoring, unsatisfactory rest, daytime sleepiness, low energy or fatigue, tiredness, initial insomnia and morning headaches. Myofunctional therapy teaches people to do daily exercises to strengthen their tongue and throat muscles. Myofunctional therapy may reduce the intensity of the OSA symptoms and reduce daytime sleepiness on its own, or combined with CPAP.</p>
Cochrane Systematic Review	<p>Rueda J-R, Mugueta-Aguinaga I, Vilaró J, Rueda-Etxebarria M. Myofunctional therapy (oropharyngeal exercises) for obstructive sleep apnoea. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2020, Issue 11. Art. No.: CD013449. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD013449.pub2. This review contains 9 trials with a total of 425 participants.</p>

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Systematic review link:

<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD013449.pub2/full>