

THE AMERICAN SLEEP APNEA ASSOCIATION

The American Sleep Apnea Association was founded, by persons with apnea and concerned health care providers and researchers in 1990, is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. The ASAA's mission is simple:

The American Sleep Apnea Association is dedicated to reducing injury, disability, and death from sleep apnea and to enhancing the well being of those affected by this common disorder.

As part of its endeavors to increase understanding of sleep apnea, the ASAA fulfills hundreds of requests for information from the public each year and answers a multitude of questions about diagnosis and treatment options. The ASAA maintains a web site, www.sleepapnea.org, which provides a wealth of information for those seeking information on sleep apnea including links to other useful sites. In addition, the ASAA also works with other non-profit organizations and societies for health care professionals to reach the undiagnosed. Our Patient Education Bulletins are available for photocopying and distribution by physicians and other health professionals.

The ASAA A.W.A.K.E. Network plays a crucial role in the ASAA's support efforts. "A.W.A.K.E." is an acronym for "Alert, Well, And Keeping Energetic," characteristics that are uncommon in persons with untreated apnea. Founded in 1988 as a mutual-help support group for persons affected by sleep apnea, the A.W.A.K.E. Network is now composed of more than 300 groups in nearly all fifty states. A.W.A.K.E. meetings are held regularly and guest speakers are often invited to address the group. Topics may include advice on complying with CPAP therapy, legal issues affecting those with sleep apnea, weight loss, treatment options such as oral appliances, and new research findings.

In other efforts to fulfill its mission, the ASAA publishes the WAKE-UP CALL. The newsletter provides useful, accurate, and objective medical information as well as articles on health wellness, research news, and social and legal issues facing people with sleep apnea. The ASAA widely distributes its brochure "Get the Facts About Sleep Apnea" that defines the disease, describes its symptoms, explains the consequences of untreated apnea, and encourages those who may have apnea to seek diagnosis and treatment. A simple self-diagnostic test, the ASAA Snore Score, is included.

In addition, the ASAA offers a 10-minute video entitled "What Is Sleep Apnea?" which explains how apnea is diagnosed and treated.

To summarize, ASAA promotes education, awareness and advocacy; the A.W.A.K.E. Network of support groups promotes mutual support, continuing education and empowerment.

For more information, contact the American Sleep Apnea Association at the above address or by sending an email message to asaa@sleepapnea.org.

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