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Sleep Apnea as Cardiovascular Risk: An Unrecognized Medical Problem

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Sleep Apnea is a common medical problem, yet underrecognized and often goes undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. There are mainly three types of Sleep Apnea – Obstructive, Central and Mixed. The diagnosis is mainly clinical but requires simple test called polysomnography or Sleep Study. Sleep Apnea if left undiagnosed and untreated can lead to several health related complications. Most importantly it poses risk for cardiovascular complications which can sometimes be potentially serious and even life threatening. The cardiovascular complications once recognized as secondary to Sleep Apnea are readily manageable and definitely saves further disease burden, healthcare resources as well as life. The core of management is by providing oxygen under pressure using a device called CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure). Sleep Apnea is preventable and once identified can be a life changing experience as well as lifesaving.

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