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**The impact on nocturnal CPAP-treatment on
sexuality and closeness in patients with
obstructive sleep apnea**

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Akademisk avhandling

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>Sleep has a major impact on our wellbeing and how we perform. OSA has an estimated prevalence of 2 % in women and 4 % in male and is characterized by repetitive complete (apnoea) or partial (hypopnoea) cessation of breathing. I wondered how the patients managed sexuality and closeness when suffering from OSA and in particular how the Continuous Positive Airways Pressure (CPAP) treatment affected their sexuality and closeness. A review of the literature showed there was little published information concerning the impact of CPAP treatment on sexuality, why it was difficult to advise the patients on this matter and how to predict whether closeness to one's partner would be reduced or improved when treated with CPAP. Furthermore, in order to guide and inform a patient as to how CPAP treatment may affect sexuality you have to know about sexual function and dysfunction as well as the difference between women and men. The overall aim of this thesis was to study the impact of nocturnal CPAP treatment on sexuality and closeness in patients with obstructive sleep apnoea.</p> <p>Patients with a diagnosis of OSA were consecutively recruited to the study. After recruitment, 308 men and 92 women were included and after one year 150 men and 44 women remained in the study. Data was collected by self-reported questionnaires, The Epworth Sleepiness Scale, the Life Satisfaction 11. The specific sexual questionnaire for men was the Brief Sexual Function Inventory. The specific sexual questionnaires for women were the Female Sexual Function Index and the Female Sexual Distress Scale. Manifest Female Sexual Dysfunction (MFSD) is present when the respondent has both sexual difficulty and sexual distress. Male: Satisfaction with Sexual Life (Li-Sat 11) and both general and functional aspects of sexuality (BSFI) were significantly improved after 1 year of CPAP treatment. Female: Manifest Female Sexual Dysfunction was significantly improved after one year of CPAP treatment, but no significant changes in isolated sexual difficulties or sexual distress were found. Daytime sleepiness decreased significantly in both male and female, indicating a positive effect of CPAP treatment. Sexuality improved both in general and specific aspects in male patients and female patients had a decrease in sexual dysfunction. Many patients may be reluctant to use a treatment involving the use of a mask, a tube and machine every night for many years to come. However, one of the main findings is that CPAP treatment per se does not negatively affect family life or partner relationship. I consider this important information when initiating CPAP treatment.</p>		
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