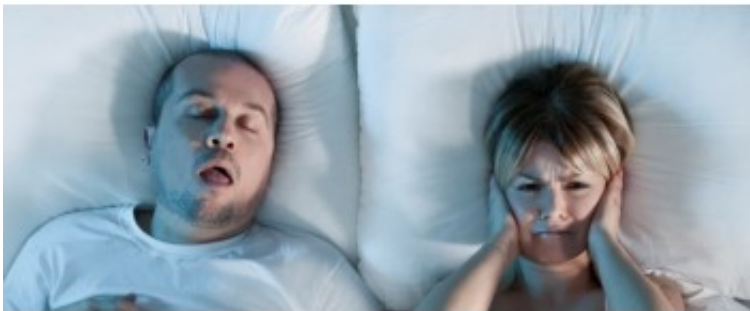


Playing a wind instrument could help lower the risk of sleep apnoea

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A new study has found that wind instrument players have a reduced risk of developing obstructive sleep apnoea.

The findings, presented today (17 April, 2015) at the Sleep and Breathing Conference 2015, suggest that this could be considered beneficial to those individuals who are at high risk of developing sleep apnoea.

Researchers in India conducted lung function testing in 64 people who played a wind instrument and compared results to a control group of 65 people who did not play any wind instruments. All participants also completed the Berlin questionnaire, an established method used to assess the risk of sleep apnoea.

When analysing the results of the questionnaires, the researchers found that the group who played the wind instruments had a lower risk of developing sleep apnoea. However, no difference was seen between the two groups in the lung function tests.

The relative risk of developing sleep apnoea based on the questionnaire was 0.18 in the wind instrument players, with a relative risk of less than one indicating a lower risk compared to controls. The researchers believe this is due to the increased muscle tone in the upper airways, which wind instrument players are likely to have.

Silas Daniel Raj, one of the authors of the study, commented: “The findings of our small study present an interesting theory on preventative measures or treatment in sleep apnoea. If the findings are confirmed in larger groups, wind instrument playing could become a cheap and non-invasive method of preventing sleep apnoea in those at risk of developing the condition.”