

Influence of Exercise, Weight Loss, and Exercise + Weight Loss on Sleep Apnea. This project would be suitable for students studying Nutrition and Obesity or Behavioral Health. This is a VA-funded study. A major caveat: one has to be enrolled at the VA to help, and it takes a few months to do this. We are assessing 90 overweight or obese veterans with obstructive sleep apnea. The prevalence of sleep apnea is about 15% in the general population, and it seems to be twice as high in veterans. Sleep apnea is associated with increased mortality and multiple health problems. Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is the primary means of treating sleep apnea. However, compliance to CPAP is very low, as it is associated with many side effects. A recent large-scale study published in NEJM showed no benefit of CPAP for preventing cardiovascular mortality. We have found that exercise is modestly beneficial for sleep apnea, and this effect is independent of weight loss, which can also reduce sleep apnea. The aim of this study is to examine the effects of exercise and weight loss alone and in combination. Following screening and baseline assessment, 90 veterans will be randomized to one of three 16-week treatments: (1) exercise 4 days per week (aerobic 4 days+ strength training on 2 days); (2) weight loss with the aim of 10% body weight through counseling, meal replacement, etc.; (3) exercise combined with weight loss. We are examining changes in sleep apnea and associated morbidity, including body weight and composition, blood pressure, glucose, insulin, sleepiness, etc.

For more information:

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