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Obstructive Sleep Apnea Expected to Affect Nearly 77 million U.S. Adults by 2050, New Resmed Study Finds

Published in *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine*, research reveals sharp rise in OSA, especially among women, highlighting the need for earlier diagnosis, preventative strategies, and personalized care

SAN DIEGO, Aug. 27, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Resmed (NYSE: RMD, ASX: RMD), the leading health technology company focused on sleep, breathing, and care delivered in the home, today announced the publication of a landmark study in [The Lancet Respiratory Medicine](#) projecting a significant rise in obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) in the United States over the next three decades due to a variety of factors, including an aging population and increasing body mass index (BMI).

The study estimates that by 2050, OSA will affect nearly 77 million U.S. adults, representing a relative¹ increase of nearly 35% from 2020 and impacting 46% of adults aged 30-69. The study is the first of its kind to estimate OSA prevalence in the United States between 2020 and 2050. It used an open-cohort dynamic population model factoring in changes in age, sex, and BMI.

OSA is a chronic sleep-related breathing disorder where breathing repeatedly stops during sleep, affecting nearly 1 billion people globally². It is linked to serious health consequences, including hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and even stroke³. Yet, more than 80% of cases go undiagnosed and untreated⁴. The new research highlights an urgent need for earlier diagnosis of OSA, preventative strategies, and healthcare resource allocation to address this major public health problem.

“This study reaffirms that the number of people with OSA is expected to dramatically increase,” said Carlos Nunez, MD, Chief Medical Officer at Resmed and Study Co-Author. “As an industry, we must expand screening, increase awareness of symptoms among providers and consumers, and make it easier for people to get tested and treated, including at home. If we don’t act, we risk missing tens of millions of people who need access to care.”

Led by researchers at Resmed through their medXcloud academic-industry collaborative, involving global academic thought leaders in the fields of sleep and respiratory medicine, the study also found:

- **A 65% relative increase in OSA prevalence among women, reaching 30.4 million by 2050:** The sharp rise, attributed to factors like an aging population and underdiagnosis⁵, underscores the need for greater awareness of how OSA presents differently in women to support earlier screening, diagnosis, and targeted treatment.

- **A 19% relative increase in OSA prevalence among men, reaching 45.9 million cases by 2050:** This continued rise reflects ongoing risk in aging male populations, highlighting the need for scalable diagnostic pathways and long-term treatment strategies.
- **The impact of GLP-1 therapies on future OSA prevalence is anticipated to be limited, with reductions estimated at under 5%:** Even with advances in emerging drugs, such as GLP-1s, the overall number of people affected by OSA is expected to continue growing. GLP-1 use is estimated to reduce relative OSA prevalence by only 4% by 2050, from nearly 77 million cases to nearly 74 million cases. These estimates, from a sensitivity analysis included in the study, reflect that obesity is only one of many factors contributing to OSA, and that the significant overall growth of OSA prevalence remains a public health priority.

"Understanding how the prevalence of sleep apnea may grow, and who will be most affected, is essential for shaping smarter proactive health and public health strategies," said Atul Malhotra, MD, Senior Author of the Study, Vice Chair of Medicine for Research, Research Chief of Pulmonary, Critical Care, Sleep Medicine, and Physiology, and Peter C. Farrell Presidential Chair and Tenured Professor of Respiratory Medicine at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine, and Pulmonologist at UC San Diego Health. "This study fills an important gap by helping health systems, payers, and policymakers anticipate what's coming so they can invest in earlier diagnosis, expand access to care, and improve long-term outcomes for millions of patients across the country."

"Sleep apnea has long been underdiagnosed and underprioritized," said Elroy Boers, Ph.D., Lead Author of the Study and Research Scientist at Resmed. "This is the first data-driven forecast of how OSA may evolve, evidence that can drive earlier detection, proactive care, and smarter policy."

Earlier this year, Resmed [announced](#) results from a meta-analysis published in *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine*, which found that treating OSA with CPAP therapy can significantly reduce the risk of death⁶. Together, these studies highlight the need to raise awareness, enable earlier diagnosis, and ensure ongoing care to help improve outcomes and reduce the public health burden of sleep apnea.

To read the full study, see the publication in [The Lancet Respiratory Medicine](#).

To better understand your sleep health, take [Resmed's sleep assessment](#).

About Resmed

Resmed (NYSE: RMD, ASX: RMD) creates life-changing health technologies that people love. We're relentlessly committed to pioneering innovative technology to empower millions of people in 140 countries to live happier, healthier lives. Our AI-powered digital health solutions, cloud-connected devices and intelligent software make home healthcare more personalized, accessible and effective. Ultimately, Resmed envisions a world where every person can achieve their full potential through better sleep and breathing, with care delivered in their own home. Learn more about how we're redefining sleep health at [Resmed.com](#) and follow [@Resmed](#).

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¹ Relative change refers to the percentage difference between two values, calculated in relation to the starting value.

² Benjafield AV, Ayas NT, Eastwood PR, Heinzer R, Ip MSM, Morrell MJ, Nunez CM, Patel SR, Penzel T, Pépin JL, Peppard PE, Sinha S, Tufik S, Valentine K, Malhotra A. Estimation of the global prevalence and burden of obstructive sleep apnoea: a literature-based analysis. *Lancet Respir Med*. 2019 Aug;7(8):687-698. doi: 10.1016/S2213-2600(19)30198-5. Epub 2019 Jul 9. PMID: 31300334; PMCID: PMC7007763.

³ Yeghiazarians Y, Jneid H, Tietjens JR, et al. Obstructive Sleep Apnea and Cardiovascular Disease: A Scientific Statement From the American Heart Association. *Circulation* 2021; 144(3): e56-e67.

⁴ Frost & Sullivan for the AASM; Hidden Health Crisis Costing America Billions; 2016

⁵ Bouloukaki I, Tsiligianni I, Schiza S. Evaluation of Obstructive Sleep Apnea in Female Patients in Primary Care: Time for Improvement? *Med Princ Pract*. 2021;30(6):508-514

⁶ Benjafield et al; Positive airway pressure therapy and all-cause and cardiovascular mortality in people with obstructive sleep apnoea: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials and confounder-adjusted, non-randomised controlled studies; *Lancet Respir Med* 2025



Source: Resmed, Inc.