



# The experience of claustrophobia in continuous positive airway pressure therapy

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## INTRODUCTION

- Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) affects 18 million Americans
- Untreated OSA is a major cause of heart attack, heart failure, arrhythmias, stroke, premature death, peri-operative complications
- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is the mainstay therapy
- Claustrophobia impairs ability of some to use CPAP

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the meaning of claustrophobia in people with OSA?
- What are the bodily sensations of claustrophobia in people with CPAP?
- How have childhood and adult experiences impacted claustrophobia in people with CPAP?
- How do claustrophobic people cope with the challenges of using CPAP?

## PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

- Healthcare is dominated by the mechanical model of the body; the lived body experience is disregarded
- Diagnosis of OSA and treatment with CPAP disrupts the patient's world and the lived body
- Effective use of CPAP requires skillful use for the machine to withdraw into the background.
- Claustrophobia may interfere with skillful use of CPAP

## STUDY DESIGN

### Inclusion criteria

- Age 18-90, Community dwelling
- Diagnosed with sleep apnea via prior polysomnogram
- Prescribed CPAP, may be intolerant
- Subjective claustrophobia
- Ability to read and speak English, complete questionnaires and draw a picture

### Exclusion criteria

- Moderate or severe cognitive impairment and cannot complete interviews or questionnaires

## CLAUSTROPHOBIA fear of enclosed spaces

## DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRES

- Baseline demographics (age, gender, height, weight, race, household income)
- Likert type scale for anxiety, depression, claustrophobia (range 0-10)
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) (range 0-10)
- Beck Anxiety Inventory(BAI) (range 0-63)
- Claustrophobia Questionnaire and added CPAP specific items (CLQ) (range 0-196)
- Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS) (range 0-24)
- Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) (range 0-27)

## METHODOLOGY

### **Interpretive phenomenology: semi-structured interviews**

- Interview 1- claustrophobia and embodiment
- Interview 2- OSA and CPAP
  - Drawing-what claustrophobia feels like

### **Data analysis**

- Triangulation of data with interviews, drawing and questionnaires, member checking
- Review interviews and field notes for Themes, Exemplars, and Paradigm cases

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS

4 Subject interviews before July 30, 2018

- **Demographics:** Non-working Caucasian females, ages 44-68, Income \$0-75,000
- **Questionnaires** (subject range)
  - Anxiety (0-10), Depression (1-10), Claustrophobia (5-10), ACES (1-7), BAI (18-62), CLQ (26-133), ESS (6-19), PHQ-9 (10-24)
- **Significant claustrophobic triggers**
  - CPAP mask, crowds, sequential compression stockings, MRI, straitjacket
- **Embodiment-how claustrophobia feels**
  - Palpitations, sweating, chest tightness, feel like suffocating, lightheaded
- **Preliminary themes**
  - Life altering events
    - "I have to be sedated for MRI."
    - "I can't believe I have sleep apnea."
  - Altered bedtime routine
    - "I dread going to bed and put it off as long as possible."
  - Escape
    - "I need to get away."