

COMPARISON OF HSAT VERSUS PSG

By Krystle Minkoff, RPSGT, RST

Steadily becoming a popular option, home sleep apnea testing (HSAT) is being performed with increasing prevalence due to its cost effectiveness and its ability to be done inside the home. This article attempts to outline the significant differences between home sleep apnea testing and in center polysomnographic (PSG) testing, better known as HSAT vs. PSG.

As of today, current HSAT methods are not as comprehensive as a PSG. Polysomnography can accurately monitor sleep stages, blood oxygen levels, respiratory effort and airflow, limb movements, muscle activity, heart rate and body position. HSAT is generally unable to measure sleep or the full range of events that comprise the Respiratory Disturbance Index (RDI). This can result in subtle breathing irregularities being missed using HSAT.

In addition to this, if the patient's results are determined to be borderline, only an in center test can rule out obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). This translates to the patient having to complete two procedures vs. one. In a sleep center, professionals monitoring the patient ensure the correct placement of equipment, ongoing integrity of the recording, and the correct measurement of important variables. However, due to their convenience, for some patients HSAT methods have competitive advantages over PSG.

The question we should ask ourselves is, under what conditions is the use of HSAT vs. PSG appropriate? Currently, standards of practice indicate that PSG is recommended to patients if they have comorbidities or another suspected sleep disorder, such as narcolepsy, insomnia, periodic limb movement disorder or a less known variant of sleep apnea called upper airway resistance syndrome (UARS).

As we continue to navigate the ever increasing use of HSAT, it is paramount to note the importance of being evaluated at an AASM accredited center with a board certified sleep physician. Obtaining care at a facility that maintains the gold standard of accreditation where stringent criteria are met can make one confident that their testing, results, and treatment outcomes are being delivered with the upmost quality of patient care, whether using PSG or HSAT. ❖



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Krystle Minkoff, RPSGT, RST, is a veteran sleep expert with more than 15 years of experience, who brings vast knowledge and authority as a consultant and published author to the sleep industry. Krystle shares her experience by continually producing new industry related articles.

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