

Introduction to Positional Therapy

For patients with obstructive sleep apnea, the airway is floppy and can collapse when you are sleeping. This causes the oxygen levels to fall and the carbon dioxide levels to rise. This can cause your brain to wake up briefly in order to open up the airway and normalize those levels. Once you fall asleep again, the cycle continues. This can lead to poor sleep (from the awakenings) and high blood pressure or stroke (from the low oxygen levels and the adrenaline surge that happens when you wake up repeatedly).

Positional Therapy: For many people, snoring and sleep apnea are much worse when they are on their backs. Some people only have sleep apnea in the supine (on your back) position. This is called positional sleep apnea. One treatment option is to avoid sleeping on your back. This can be accomplished using a snore shirt, a t-shirt with a tennis ball sewn into it, or a positioning device. Traditionally, these cause you to awaken when you are on your back and make you roll over. This can result in fragmented sleep.

There is a newer device called the NightBalance Lunoa. This is a slim pouch that is worn across your chest. It contains a small (credit-card sized) device which will gently vibrate when you are on your back.

This isn't enough to wake you from sleep but is enough to make you roll over onto your side. This has been studied and compared to CPAP therapy. They found that this was effective treatment for positional sleep apnea.

This also has the ability to monitor your progress – it takes a few days to learn your habits and then keeps track of how often it needs to remind you to roll over. It measures snoring as well as your body position and generates a report that you can review with your physician.

How it Works:

- You can fall asleep in any position. After Minutes the device activates and begins monitoring.
- NightBalance detects when you are on your back. It prompts you to move off your back without disturbing your sleep
- Vibrations will stop when you are on your side. This allows you to sleep without your sleep apnea causing you to wake up at night.

This is a device that requires a prescription. While it is not covered by insurance, it does have a code that will allow you to use your HSA or flexible spending account.

[Link to manufacturer information](#)