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**Title:** Clinical presentation and severity of obstructive sleep apnea hypopnea syndrome in Tunisian women

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**Body:** Introduction: obstructive sleep apnea hypopnea syndrome (OSAHS) results from recurrent episodes of breathing cessation during sleep. OSAHS is more prevalent in men than women and is not well managed in female patients. Aims of the study: studying the influence of female gender on clinical presentation and laboratory findings and identifying predictors of severity of OSAHS in women. Patients and methods: During six years 427 patients were referred to our department for a suspicion of obstructive sleep apnea hypopnea syndrome and only 373 patients had an OSAHS confirmed by nocturnal polygraph. Among these patients 148 were female. Clinical data, spirometric, a six-minutes-walking-test, laboratory tests and cardiac ultrasound were determined in these 148 women. Results: Among the 148 patients 46% had a severe OSAHS with an apnea hypopnea index (AHI) >30. Hypertension was found in 70% of patients, diabetes in 33%, asthma in 21% and dyslipidemia in 11% of patients. Older age, Epworth sleep scale, greater body mass index, and the duration of the evolution of symptoms were risk factors of severity of OSAHS in female patients. Conclusion: Despite the higher frequency of OSAHS in male patients, it is also common in women.