

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS  
of  
BREATHING PROBLEMS  
related to  
NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASE

1. Do you wake in the morning feeling rested?
2. Do you have headaches in the middle of the night or upon waking?
3. Do you take frequent naps or nod off during the day?
4. Do you have shortness of breath, especially when talking?
5. Is your blood carbon dioxide level above 50?
6. Is your vital capacity less than 50% of predicted?

- Questions 1-3 are based on the notion that sleep is supposed to be restorative. If you have a neuromuscular disease, your body may be waking you up frequently so that you will take a breath. You may not be aware of this. Thus, you may wake feeling tired, or have a headache (CO<sub>2</sub> build up), or take frequent naps.
- Question 4 is based on the presence of bulbar and diaphragmatic weakness.
- Questions 5 & 6 are based on clinical measurements and indicate respiratory muscle weakness.



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