Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction (SAFER) study: Protocol for a pragmatic randomised clinical trial of positive airway pressure as an antenatal therapy for fetal growth restriction in maternal obstructive sleep apnoea

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ABSTRACT
Introduction Fetal growth restriction (FGR) is a major contributor to fetal and neonatal morbidity and mortality with intrauterine, neonatal and lifelong complications. This study explores maternal obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) as a potentially modifiable risk factor for FGR. We hypothesise that, in pregnancies complicated by FGR, treating mothers who have OSA using positive airway pressure (PAP) will improve birth weight and neonatal outcomes.

Methods and analysis The Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction study is a prospective, block-randomised, single-blinded, multicentre, pragmatic controlled trial. We enrol pregnant women aged 18–50, between 22 and 31 weeks of gestation, with established FGR based on second trimester ultrasound, who do not have other prespecified known causes of FGR (such as congenital anomalies or intrauterine infection). In stage 1, participants are screened by questionnaire for OSA risk. If OSA risk is identified, participants proceed to stage 2, where they undergo home sleep apnoea testing. Participants are determined to have OSA if they have an apnoea-hypopnoea index (AHI) ≥5 (if the oxygen desaturation index (ODI) is also ≥5) or if they have an AHI ≥10 (even if the ODI is <5). These participants proceed to stage 3, where they are randomised to nightly treatment with PAP or no PAP (standard care control), which is maintained until delivery. The primary outcome is unadjusted birth weight; secondary outcomes include fetal growth velocity on ultrasound, enrolment-to-delivery interval, gestational age at delivery, birth weight corrected for gestational age, stillbirth, Apgar score, rate of admission to higher levels of care (neonatal intensive care unit or special care nursery) and length of neonatal stay. These outcomes are compared between PAP and control using intention-to-treat analysis.

Strengths and limitations of this study
- Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction study is a multicentre, pragmatic trial conducted in a tertiary care setting.
- Studying patients with both fetal growth restriction and home sleep apnoea testing-diagnosed obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) increases the potential for benefit from the intervention but limits generalisability.
- The intervention is positive airway pressure, a routine, safe and effective therapy for OSA in non-pregnant populations.
- While investigators and care providers are blinded to group allocation in stage 3, participants are unblinded.
- Positive findings will increase OSA awareness and treatment in pregnancy.

BACKGROUND
Fetal growth restriction (FGR) affects up to 10% of all pregnancies and is a major contributor to fetal and neonatal morbidity and mortality with intrauterine, neonatal and lifelong complications. FGR is second only to prematurity as a leading cause of perinatal morbidity and mortality. Both FGR and prematurity are independent risk factors for the development of cognitive delay, poor academic achievement and adult diseases...
such as obesity, type 2 diabetes mellitus, coronary artery disease and stroke. There are many potential causes of FGR, but in the absence of underlying genetic conditions, congenital anomalies or intrauterine infection, FGR is typically due to impaired uteroplacental perfusion. Current assessment is based on repeated ultrasound assessments of fetal growth, antenatal testing including non-stress test and/or biophysical profile (including electronic fetal heart rate monitoring) and umbilical artery Doppler velocimetry. Intervention is limited to antenatal steroid administration and interventional delivery when the risk of stillbirth is deemed too high to continue the pregnancy. There is no intervention currently available to improve uteroplacental blood flow and fetal growth in utero, so there is often no alternative to interventional delivery. When the pregnancy is remote from term, interventional delivery exposes an already compromised fetus to additional complications of prematurity, in particular to neonatal brain injury from intraventricular haemorrhage.

Pregnancy is associated with a higher incidence of sleep disordered breathing (SDB), a group of chronic conditions involving recurrent episodic partial or complete cessation of breathing throughout the night. Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) is an increasingly common form of SDB in both the general and pregnant population. OSA is characterised by complete (apnoea) or incomplete (hypopnoea) collapse of the upper airway during sleep leading to recurrent episodic cessation or limitation of normal breathing. This in turn leads to recurrent oxygen desaturation and hypercapnia, frequent night-time arousals and excessive daytime sleepiness.

OSA in pregnancy has been associated with poor maternal-fetal outcomes, including gestational hypertension, pre-eclampsia, gestational diabetes, FGR, low birth weight, preterm delivery and higher rates of neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) admission. Patients with OSA are more likely to have negative neonatal outcomes, and severe maternal morbidity and mortality, regardless of their obesity status. The relationship between severity of OSA in pregnancy and adverse outcomes is an ongoing area of research. Unfortunately, because few pregnant women are referred for polysomnography (PSG), it is likely that OSA and other sleep disorders are underdiagnosed, with the OSA-related symptoms of snoring, disrupted sleep and fatigue being frequently attributed to transient features of normal pregnancy.

Recurrent apnoeic and hypopnoeic episodes are associated with intermittent oxygen desaturation and hypercapnia. Recurrent hypoxia leads to oxidative stress, sympathetic activation and inflammation that may be harmful to both the mother and her fetus. Acute hypercapnia in pregnant mice and rats has been shown to cause acute placental hypoperfusion and acute fetal asphyxia. There is very little information about the effect of these episodes on the human fetus. One small observational study demonstrated fetal heart rate decelerations accompanying maternal oxyhaemoglobin desaturation, while another found no association.

Positive airway pressure (PAP) is a common and effective treatment for OSA which acts by mechanically splinting the upper airway with pressurised air to prevent collapse. PAP delivered at a single pressure (continuous PAP or CPAP) usually requires a sleep study to identify optimal settings; it also cannot respond to changes in upper airway function related to changes in habitus, body position, sleep stage or other factors. In contrast, auto-titrating PAP (aPAP) can detect upper airway resistance and respond by adjusting the delivered pressure (within a selected range). The delivered pressures from aPAP can therefore be lower than from CPAP, which makes aPAP more tolerable for most patients. We use aPAP as the intervention for all patients in the Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction (SAFER) study. However, as much of the medical literature is still based on CPAP rather than aPAP, we use the generic term PAP throughout the remainder of this manuscript.

PAP is a proven low-risk therapeutic intervention for patients with OSA in the general, non-obstetric population. Multiple studies have shown that PAP use in patients with OSA reduces the incidence of death from cardiac-related complications including congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease, arrhythmia and stroke, and may improve outcomes related to diabetes. Small studies of PAP in pregnant women with severe pre-eclampsia and OSA diagnosed by PSG demonstrated improved maternal haemodynamic profiles and cardiac output, although no obstetric or neonatal outcomes were measured.

The hypothesis of the SAFER study is that, in pregnancies complicated by FGR where the mothers have been diagnosed with OSA, maternal PAP therapy will improve intrauterine fetal growth and birth weight, increase randomisation-to-delivery interval and the gestational age at delivery and improve neonatal well-being. Ultimately, if PAP therapy is shown to improve intrauterine fetal growth in pregnancies with OSA and FGR, obstetric practice would be expected to change. Such a finding would lead to a clinical imperative to screen, diagnose and treat OSA in pregnancy, particularly in the presence of FGR.

METHODS

Research design overview

The Human Research Protection Office at Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, Missouri, the Research Subject Review Board at the University of Rochester, New York, and the Helsinki Committee for Ethics in Research in Human Subjects in Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel, all approved the study. The choice of these sites was determined by the location of the principal investigators involved in initiation of this study; however, all sites are academic, high-risk obstetric, tertiary referral centres with large numbers of pregnancies complicated by FGR. There is wide
geographic and demographic diversity between these centres, which adds to the generalisability of the study. The SAFER study detailed in this protocol adheres to the Standard Protocol Items; Recommendations for Interventional Trials checklist, and lists the 24 items in the WHO Trial Registration Data Set. The protocol version is dated 5 February 2020. The SAFER study is a three-stage trial that assesses pregnant patients with diagnosed FGR. The overall flow of participants through the SAFER study is shown in figure 1.

We enrol women with pregnancies complicated by FGR between 22 and 31 weeks of gestation. Stage 1 is a brief telephone or in-person questionnaire to identify which of these pregnant women are at elevated risk for OSA; these women are then recruited into stage 2. Stage 2 is a prospective observational study using home sleep apnoea testing (HSAT) to confirm the diagnosis of OSA. Participants meeting OSA diagnostic criteria progress to stage 3. Stage 3 is a pragmatic randomised clinical trial of PAP as the intervention, versus a control group of standard care which does not include PAP. The primary outcome of stage 3 is birth weight; secondary outcomes include fetal growth velocity on ultrasound, birth weight corrected for gestational age, enrolment-to-delivery.

Figure 1 Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction (SAFER) study flow chart. AHI, apnoea-hypopnoea index; BMI, body mass index; FGR, fetal growth restriction; NICU, neonatal intensive care unit; OSA, obstructive sleep apnoea; PAP, positive airway pressure; RCT, randomised controlled trial.
interval, gestational age at delivery and neonatal outcomes.

All three stages of this international, multicentre study will be conducted at three academic medical centres, which all serve a large and diverse population of high-risk obstetric patients. These centres are: Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, Missouri (Barnes-Jewish Hospital); University of Rochester, New York (Strong Memorial Hospital); and Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel (Hadassah Hospital, Ein Karem and Hadassah Hospital, Mt Scopus). The demographic characteristics of these hospitals are summarised in table 1.

There is lack of clarity in current guidelines over the use of the term FGR. We use the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology definition of FGR as estimated fetal weight below the 10th percentile for a population, and small for gestational age (SGA) as birth weight below the 10th percentile.

### Patient and public involvement

In an unpublished pilot study completed prior to completion of this protocol, pregnant volunteers used HSAT as described in stage 2, and OSA-positive subjects used PAP as described in stage 3. The pilot study allowed investigators to assess the night-time tolerability of both HSAT and PAP for participants. Out of 57 patients who received HSAT, 52 had data adequate for analysis. Of these 52 patients, 10 met OSA criteria for PAP use (see below); however, one had an urgent delivery before PAP could be distributed. Of the remaining nine subjects, one declined to use PAP, one could not tolerate it and all the remaining seven met PAP adherence criteria (see below). Generally, adherence and comfort were good for both HSAT and PAP.

As part of the effort to design the study with a tolerable intervention and a meaningful outcome, two of our principal investigators met with community obstetricians, primary care physicians and with a non-profit organisation advocating for high-risk pregnant maternal health, in order to discuss the study and obtain feedback well in advance of its final iteration.

### Study participants

#### Inclusion criteria

This study enrols participants in a three-stage protocol. We enrol pregnant women, aged 18–50 years, who have been diagnosed with established FGR. FGR is defined as estimated fetal weight <10th percentile based on at least one routine second trimester ultrasound without a subsequent increase to >15th percentile on any ultrasounds prior to enrolment. If the ultrasound that identified FGR was performed prior to 21 completed weeks, a repeat scan after 22 weeks is required to confirm the diagnosis of FGR prior to enrolment. The lower limit of gestational age at enrolment to stage 1 is 22+0 weeks; the upper limit of gestational age at enrolment to stage 1 is an adequate gestational age to be able to complete stages 1 and 2 and, if appropriate, to receive stage 3 intervention by no later than 32+0 weeks.

#### Exclusion criteria

The following exclusion criteria apply at the time of enrolment: prespecified independent cause of FGR (congenital or genetic anomalies, suspected aneuploidy with two minor or one major markers, intrauterine infection or multiple gestation); active labour; a concrete decision already made to induce labour or perform caesarean delivery within 2 days; reverse end-diastolic flow in the umbilical artery (note that other abnormal Doppler flow velocities such as absent end-diastolic flow in the umbilical artery or uterine artery notchling or increased pulsatility index are not exclusion criteria unless other exclusion criteria are present); pre-existing formal diagnosis of OSA; chronic pulmonary disease; haemoglobinopathies (including thalassemia major and sickle cell disease, but

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of the medical centres in the SAFER study (data for 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Deliveries</th>
<th>CS rate (%)</th>
<th>US protocol used for estimated fetal weight</th>
<th>US fetal growth nomogram used for FGR</th>
<th>Birthweight nomogram used for SGA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Washington, Barnes Jewish Hospital, St Louis, Missouri</td>
<td>3576</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>Hadlock et al</td>
<td>A US national reference for fetal growth</td>
<td>Revised Fenton growth chart for preterm infants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Rochester, Strong Hospital, Rochester, New York</td>
<td>2859</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>Hadlock et al</td>
<td>Local nomogram from 115,000 births in the nine-county Finger Lakes Region, 2004–2013</td>
<td>Local nomogram from 115,000 births in the nine-county Finger Lakes Region, 2004–2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel</td>
<td>8050</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>Hadlock et al</td>
<td>International estimated fetal weight standards of the INTERGROWTH-21st Project</td>
<td>Birthweight standards in the liveborn population in Israel</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5812</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CS, caesarean section; FGR, fetal growth restriction; SAFER, Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction; SGA, small for gestational age; US, ultrasound.
not sickle trait or thalassemia minor without clinical manifestations); maternal craniofacial anomalies which might impair the ability of the participant to use PAP appliances; lack of proficiency in English (Rochester or St Louis) or either Hebrew, Arabic or English (Jerusalem); inability to understand the consent; and unwillingness or inability to participate adequately in OSA screening (stage 1) or in HSAT (stage 2). Note that poor adherence to PAP (stage 3) is not an exclusion criterion. PAP usage is recorded but outcomes are assessed by intention to treat.

**Stage 1: initial screening for OSA risk**
Stage 1 of the trial is designed in accordance with the Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) statement (https://www.strobe-statement.org). Potential participants with FGR as defined above are identified through referral from the obstetric ultrasound service, directly from the obstetrician or by review of the electronic medical record. Those who meet inclusion and exclusion criteria are approached for consent either by telephone, in the outpatient clinics or as inpatients by a member of the research team. Participants undergo a brief screening questionnaire to assess for risk of OSA. Participants are deemed to be at risk for OSA if they report loud snoring, report witnessed gasping for air during sleep, have an Epworth score >10 or a Faccos score >75 (see figure 1). Participants with evidence of OSA risk are invited to proceed to stage 2.

**Stage 2: HSAT and OSA screening tools**
Participants identified as being at risk for OSA in stage 1 progress to stage 2. The primary assessment for confirming OSA diagnosis in this study is HSAT. Stage 2 of the trial is an observational study designed in accordance with the STROBE statement (https://www.strobe-statement.org/).

Prior to HSAT, participants are assessed for demographic data, medical comorbidities, body mass index, neck circumference and the presence of any craniofacial abnormalities. They also undergo a more detailed OSA assessment consisting of component parts of five standard OSA screening tools (STOP-BANG, Berlin Questionnaire, American Society of Anesthesiologists checklist, Flemons Index and Epworth Sleepiness Scale). These screening tools for OSA have each been validated in the non-pregnant population; some but not all have been validated in pregnancy. HSAT is performed with a Food and Drug Administration-approved type III home sleep monitor (ResMed Apnea Link Air, ResMed, San Diego, California), which records the following: (1) air flow using nasal cannula and pressure transducer; (2) respiratory effort using elastic respiratory inductance plethysmography belts around the chest and abdomen; (3) ECG; and (4) pulse oximetry. A trained member of the study team shows each study participant how to apply the sensors and use the HSAT monitor and instructs her to wear the HSAT monitor for two consecutive nights. The HSAT monitor data are downloaded, and studies are reviewed and scored by a registered polysomnographic technologist per standard scoring protocols for apnoea-hypopnoea index (AHI) and oxygen desaturation index (ODI). AHI is defined as the number of apnoeas plus hypopnoeas on average each hour.

Hypopnoea is defined by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommended rule 1A; where a hypopnoea requires all of the following to be met: (1) the peak signal for respiratory excursions drops by ≥30% from pre-event baseline; (2) the duration of the ≥30% drop is ≥10 s; and (3) there is a ≥2% oxygen desaturation from pre-event baseline and/or the event is associated with an arousal. ODI is defined as the number of ≥3% oxygen desaturations per hour of sleep without the required drop in peak signal excursions.

HSAT generally underestimates AHI compared with PSG, as the entire study duration is used as the denominator when calculating AHI. These errors are most evident in mild OSA. To maximise sensitivity to detect OSA yet improve specificity in this pragmatic study, we add an ODI ≥5 criterion in cases where AHI is between 5 and 10. Accordingly, an HSAT that is positive for OSA is defined as either an AHI ≥5 with an ODI ≥5 or as an AHI ≥10 regardless of the ODI.

The second night of HSAT monitoring serves only as a backup in case the first night is inadequate to determine the AHI and ODI. Variables derived from HSAT include AHI, ODI, SaO2 nadir and time with SaO2 <90%. Investigators, treating physicians and participants are blinded to these results until after delivery. The only result that is unblinded prior to delivery is the binary ‘OSA positive’ versus ‘OSA negative’ HSAT result. Participants with an HSAT that is positive for OSA will proceed to stage 3. All participants from stage 2 are followed through the time of delivery and assessed for maternal and fetal outcomes after delivery (details below).

**Stage 3: randomised trial of PAP therapy**
Participants diagnosed with OSA in stage 2 proceed to stage 3, which is a randomised controlled trial (RCT) of PAP versus standard care control. The RCT is designed in accordance with the Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials statement (http://www.consort-statement.org). The primary outcome is unadjusted birth weight.

Participants randomised to PAP are asked to use PAP whenever sleeping, from the time of randomisation until delivery. The PAP device is the ResMed AirSense 10 ‘AutoSet for Her’, set at the widest pressure range of 4–20 cmH2O. The low end of the range is increased whenever sleeping, from the time of randomisation until delivery. The PAP device is the ResMed AirSense 10 ‘AutoSet for Her’, set at the widest pressure range of 4–20 cmH2O. The low end of the range is increased whenever sleeping, from the time of randomisation.
Airview (ResMed). In case of malfunction of this system, adherence is also recorded by a memory card in each PAP device. Adherence is monitored twice in the first week, then weekly until the end of the study. We have defined acceptable adherence to PAP as \( \pm 4 \) hours of treatment on \( \geq 70\% \) of nights from the first night after PAP set-up to the night prior to delivery. This definition is based on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services guideline.\(^4\)

If a participant does not meet this benchmark based on the nights studied, she receives a call from a team member and is offered a troubleshooting visit to re-essess mask fit, machine settings and other changes in equipment in order to try to improve adherence.

**Recruitment, randomisation and blinding**

Participant recruitment occurs simultaneously at all sites (Barnes-Jewish Hospital, Washington University in St Louis; Strong Memorial Hospital, University of Rochester; and Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel). Randomised allocation in stage 3 occurs only after participant enrolment to avoid selection bias. Randomised allocation is performed centrally by random number generator using block randomisation with 1:1 allocation to PAP versus non-PAP control, using randomised blocks of either two or four participants. Randomisation is stratified by study site; within each site, blocks are trichotomised by AHI into low (AHI 5–15), medium (AHI 16–30) or high (AHI >30) as defined above. Only the coordinating-centre study coordinator is unblinded to absolute AHI or AHI category. All sites produce a weekly report on the number of eligible participants, the number of participants approached and the number recruited. To aid data homogeneity, a central data entry system is used (Research Electronic Data Capture; REDCap). At each centre, the investigators have a secure password allowing access to the protected database. After randomised allocation, the participant is notified of her allocation by the site investigator; subjects in the PAP group are then instructed on PAP use and a mask fitting session is scheduled. Participants are instructed not to reveal their group allocation to the technicians performing follow-up ultrasounds or to the obstetricians making clinical management decisions.

**Outcome measures and analysis**

**Primary outcome**

The goal for stage 1 is to identify OSA risk as defined above for the purpose of recruiting participants into stage 2. The goal for stage 2 is to identify OSA based on HSAT criteria as defined above for the purpose of recruiting participants into stage 3. The goal for stage 3, and the primary outcome of the SAFER study, is the impact of the randomised treatment intervention (PAP vs standard care control) on unadjusted birth weight. Birth weight is an endpoint driven by multiple factors including intrauterine fetal growth velocity and gestational age at delivery. These factors may not be independent of each other, as frequently women with severe FGR have interventional delivery performed remote from term, either for fetal indications or for maternal indications (typically when FGR is accompanied by pre-eclampsia). The primary endpoint, unadjusted birth weight, will be corrected for gestational age and by appropriate racial and local nomograms in multivariate analysis.

**Secondary outcomes**

The secondary outcome of stage 1 is the percentage of patients with FGR who screen positive for OSA. The secondary outcome for stage 2 is the percentage of patients who test positive for OSA in HSAT. These outcomes will help determine the clinical feasibility and cost-effectiveness of this strategy in the general population. An additional secondary outcome of stage 2 is to assess the predictive value of each of the OSA screening tools for identifying OSA in pregnancy. Secondary outcomes of stage 3 are as follows: (1) obstetric outcomes: ultrasound fetal growth velocity,\(^4\) enrolment-to-delivery interval, gestational age at delivery, birth weight (as a Z-score) corrected for gestational age\(^4\) using an algorithm to standardise gestational age,\(^4\) stillbirth; (2) neonatal outcomes: Apgar score, rate of admission to higher levels of care (NICU or special care nursery), length of neonatal stay.

Exploratory outcomes of stage 3 are as follows: (1) obstetric outcomes: mode of delivery, umbilical cord gases, umbilical artery blood flows; (2) maternal outcomes: postpartum depression Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) score, rate of hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, rate of gestational diabetes mellitus; (3) neonatal outcomes: postnatal hypoglycaemia (<40 mg/dL at any time)\(^4\) and/or requirement for intravenous glucose treatment based on American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines,\(^4\) rates of hypoxic ischaemic neonatal encephalopathy, neonatal death in first year of life.

Primary and secondary outcomes are compared between the two study groups in stage 3 (OSA-positive patients randomised to standard care with no PAP vs those randomised to PAP therapy). We use intention-to-treat analysis.

**Planned subgroup analyses**

We plan the following subgroup analyses:

**PAP use**

The effect of PAP on primary and secondary outcomes based not on intention to treat, but rather on PAP adherence (as described above). The clinical justification of this subgroup allocation is to assess whether a negative or a borderline primary outcome of SAFER may mask a true clinical effect of PAP when used with good adherence. This subgroup analysis will also accommodate the unlikely crossover of a patient allocated to the no-PAP control in stage 3, but who is subsequently referred by their primary physician or obstetrician for OSA work-up (not current standard of care) and who goes on to receive PAP.
OSA severity
The effect of PAP on primary and secondary outcomes with stratification by OSA severity (mild, AHI 5–15; moderate, AHI 15–30; severe >30). We hypothesise that maternal and fetal outcomes will be most improved following PAP therapy in patients with the most severe cases of OSA. The clinical justification of this subgroup allocation is to assess whether a negative or borderline primary outcome of SAFER may mask a true clinical effect of PAP when used in patients with more severe OSA; this may also aid in the determination of an optimal target population based on OSA severity for clinical use of PAP in FGR.

Planned exploratory subgroup analyses
PAP use
The effect of PAP usage as a continuous variable (mean hours of PAP use per night) on primary and secondary outcomes; the purpose of this exploratory subgroup analysis is to explore the possible dose-response effect of PAP.

OSA severity
The effect of PAP on primary and secondary outcomes with stratification by secondary measures from the HSAT: ODI, SpO2 nadir and time with SpO2 <90%; where the stratification into mild, moderate and severe will be determined after examining the distribution of data; the purpose of this exploratory subgroup analysis is to explore whether other measures of OSA severity, particularly oxygen desaturation, are useful to direct which patients may benefit from PAP therapy.

Effect of untreated OSA
Comparison between OSA-negative patients from stage 2 versus untreated OSA-positive patients (non-PAP control) from stage 3 (we anticipate this will be approximately a 3:1 ratio); the purpose of this exploratory subgroup analysis is to assess the deleterious effects of OSA on maternal and fetal outcomes in these patients.

Statistical analysis
Data are assessed for normality by visual inspection of the frequency plot (histogram) and Q-Q plot of each outcome variable and by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Normally distributed data are presented as mean (SD); non-normally distributed data are presented as median (IQR). Our primary outcome (birth weight) (derived from stage 3) is assessed by two-tailed parametric t-test (normal distribution) or non-parametric Wilcoxon rank-sum test (non-normal distribution) as appropriate, using intention to treat as the grouping variable. The same tests are used for other continuous secondary outcome variables (gestational age at delivery; enrolment-to-delivery interval; birth weight corrected for gestational age; Apgar and umbilical cord gas). For categorical outcomes (higher level nursery admission; stillbirth; compliance with PAP), the \( \chi^2 \) test or Fisher’s exact test (if expected cells are small) is used as appropriate. Additionally, we use a mixed effects regression model to assess the effect of PAP on the longitudinal association between estimated fetal weight and Doppler ultrasound umbilical artery flow, while controlling for maternal, obstetric and fetal variables that may affect the primary outcome. Only the intercept will be specified as the random component to account for any omitted variable. By standard convention, statistical significance is based on a two-sided \( p \) value <0.05 to determine the significance of association. Statistical testing is currently planned to use SAS V.9.4 (SAS Institute).

Sample size calculation
The baseline birth weight of infants with FGR in the population from our primary study centre (Barnes-Jewish Hospital, St Louis, Missouri) is 2535±234 g (unpublished data). Based on these data, we calculated that 104 evaluable participants with OSA will need to be randomised to either PAP or control (stage 3) in order to have 90% power to detect a 150 g difference in birth weight in the PAP group compared with control. This is based on an alpha of 0.05, anticipated 5% loss to follow-up and a two-tailed t-test.

The risk of OSA in high-risk obstetric populations (such as FGR) is as high as 35%. As we are screening participants for OSA risk by a brief telephone or in-person questionnaire (stage 1) prior to HSAT testing (stage 2), we estimate that there will be an OSA-positive HSAT in 30%-50% of these screened participants. Consequently, we estimate that we will need to assess HSAT in 200–350 participants in stage 2 in order to achieve our sample size of 104 evaluable participants for stage 3. We estimate needing to screen some 500–1000 participants in stage 1 in order to identify these 200–350 participants for stage 3. Based on an estimated combined total of 20 000 births annually with an estimated incidence of 15% of FGR at the above centres, we estimate 3000 pregnancies complicated by FGR each year. Accounting for participants who will not meet study inclusion criteria, or will decline to participate, the recruitment process is expected to last approximately 2 years.

Analysis of pragmatic elements of the SAFER study
The SAFER study is a pragmatic trial. The pragmatic elements of the study were quantified using the Pragmatic Explanatory Continuum Indicator Summary-2 tool (https://www.precis2.org). Data were obtained from the principal investigators in all study centres. According to six of the nine criteria, the SAFER study is largely a pragmatic study (figure 2). The study is particularly pragmatic for experimental intervention (a standard commercially available product), follow-up, relevance of clinical outcomes and analysis. It is more explanatory for patient selection/recruitment and organisational intervention. This is because OSA work-up is not currently a standard of care for FGR and patients only reach stage 3 if they have FGR with HSAT-verified OSA. In this way, the study targets patients most likely to experience benefits in fetal
growth from PAP, but the generalisability to other populations may be more limited.

**Strengths and limitations**

The SAFER study has important strengths. It is a multi-centre study of a safe, routinely available intervention that examines an easily measured outcome with important short-term and long-term ramifications for the well-being of neonates and possibly for later adult life. SAFER is a pragmatic study and the intervention does not preclude any existing approaches for the management of these high-risk pregnancies. As PAP is worn only when sleeping, typically at home, it is relatively easy to keep the research team and clinical providers blinded to group allocation. As the PAP device used in this study records PAP compliance, we do not have to rely on compliance self-reporting which may overestimate nightly device use.

The SAFER study has several limitations. There is currently no definitive estimate for the impact of PAP on birth weight; hence, the effect measure used in the sample size estimation may be inaccurate, which may affect the study’s power in regard to our primary and secondary endpoints. It is likely that follow-up studies will be warranted, especially regarding whether or not the results from this specific target population can be generalised to other pregnant women with FGR, or pregnant women with OSA who may have pregnancy complications without FGR, for example, pre-eclampsia. It is the intention of the investigators to follow-up a positive result (that PAP increases intratuterine fetal growth) with a larger study to assess long-term neonatal neurological outcome.

Estimates of fetal weight were all based on the Hadlock formula using the standard biometric parameters (biparietal diameter, head circumference, abdominal circumference, femur length) [52, 53]. However, when converting fetal weight to a calculated percentile, this must reference a ‘population or customized standard’. As this is a pragmatic multicentre study, each study centre defines FGR and SGA by the population or customised standard used in their routine care (see table 1). This will lead to a slight difference between centres in FGR and SGA definition. However, fetal growth varies between different ethnic and geographical populations, so a single absolute imposed standard is of limited relevance clinically. The impact of this factor in stage 3 is reduced by stratification of randomised allocation by study centre.

Although investigators, treating physicians and ultrasound technicians are blinded to participant group allocation in this study, we do not blind participants. We are confident that our primary outcome and all of the secondary outcome measures (with the exception of the EPDS) can be assessed blindly, which minimises the risk of bias. We considered using sham PAP as a placebo control. While this could minimise bias in evaluating the effect of PAP, wearing an ineffective mask does increase the risk of discomfort and sleep disturbances for the control group, which potentially biases the results toward the active group. A recent study demonstrated that there was no difference in outcome between sham PAP and a device-free control; however, most subjects in the sham PAP group guessed correctly that they were receiving the placebo intervention.

Home sleep testing may underestimate the true presence of SDB for several reasons, most notably because it...
uses the study duration as the denominator to calculate AHI. In addition, in this study, our protocol may be overly reliant on oxygen desaturation, as that feature may not be as prominent in a young female pregnant population.\textsuperscript{51} Hence, our methods may underestimate the true prevalence and severity of SDB, and preferentially select the study population with more severe SDB. This selected population with more severe SDB may have a greater likelihood of exhibiting a clinical effect with PAP treatment. However, in this pragmatic study, we need to use HSAT so that the intervention can be started within as narrow a time frame as possible.

This study uses intention-to-treat analysis to assess the efficacy of the intervention. The adherence to PAP is relatively low across all populations.\textsuperscript{51} Adherence is generally higher for aPAP devices, as used in this study, when compared with CPAP devices.\textsuperscript{51} Two recent large national database studies reported conflicting results regarding gender effects on PAP adherence—either lower in men or lower in women,\textsuperscript{54} although it is not known whether any of these women were pregnant in those studies. It is possible that pregnant women concerned about potentially optimising fetal and maternal outcomes would be more adherent to PAP. We performed a pilot study in preparation for this protocol (see the Patient and public involvement section) in which we observed PAP adherence in seven out of nine subjects tested. Our calculated power does not specifically accommodate non-adherence. Accordingly, we also describe a planned subgroup analysis in which PAP adherence is used rather than intention to treat. Ultimately, this pragmatic study can only assess whether administering a PAP device will improve outcomes in pregnancy. If PAP is not effective during pregnancy because women do not adhere to it, that raises a separate question that will require addressing separately.

### Potential benefits, risks and alternatives

#### Benefits

All participants reaching stage 2 of the study will potentially benefit from being identified as at risk for OSA and being referred to their primary care physician for evaluation by a sleep physician after delivery.

#### Risks

The likelihood of adverse events in this study is low as the devices that will be used in the study (HSAT and aPAP) are ones that have been used in the general and obstetric population for years. In the unlikely event that serious side effects occur, these will be documented and reported to the human research protection office and to the study’s Data Safety Monitor.

#### Minimisation of risks to confidentiality

All participants are assigned a unique study ID number. The link to identifiers will be destroyed at the end of the study. Data will be stored under lock and key (office, file cabinet) and only the investigators and research team will have access. If data are published, there will be no link to identifiers. Study data are not entered into participants’ medical records. Data regarding PAP compliance are downloaded from ResMed’s secure, cloud-based patient management system to a secure server at the primary site (Washington University), where they are stored for the duration of the study.

Data from this study will be recorded using REDCap, a web-based, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act-compliant application. Access to the data is password protected. REDCap servers are housed in a secure data centre and information transmission is encrypted.

### Adverse event reporting and safety monitoring

The research team continuously monitors the study for adverse events. All serious adverse events (SAEs) are reported to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) according to IRB stipulations. Additionally, an attending anaesthesiologist at Washington University who is not involved in the study serves as the Data Safety Monitor; given the small size and relatively low-risk nature of the protocol, an individual physician rather than a full Data Safety Monitoring Board is used. This monitor reviews all adverse events annually and reviews SAEs or unexpected adverse events as they occur.

### Premature study termination

The only interim analysis to be performed in this study will be a single, blinded analysis performed by the Data Safety Monitor at the mid-way point, after 52 patients have completed stage 3. This interim analysis will assess differences between groups in birth weight, gestational age at delivery, intrauterine fetal death or reported major adverse events. The study code will not be broken, and other secondary endpoints will not be assessed. If there is a statistically significant difference between groups in one of these selected outcomes, then the Data Safety Monitor will break the code. If the intervention is associated with smaller birth weight, lower gestational age at delivery, more intrauterine fetal death or more reported major adverse events, then this will be brought to the attention of the investigators and the primary study site IRB, for consideration of possible premature termination of the study on the grounds of increased harm due to the intervention. There will be no premature termination of the study due to increased benefit of the intervention. Unless there is an increased harm of the intervention, the Data Safety Monitor will not give any information to the investigators regarding the interim analysis.

### Ethics and dissemination

Informed consent for stage 1 may be by telephone, electronic or written consent. Informed consent for stages 2 and 3 is obtained by a study investigator using electronic or written consent (see online supplemental file 1). There are no additional risks associated with the screening study (stage 1) or the observational HSAT study (stage 2).
is a potential ethical concern regarding randomisation of HSAT-positive participants (identified from stage 2 as having OSA) to either a PAP (intervention) or a no-PAP (control) group. However, this concern is minimised by the following arguments: (A) HSAT, or a formal sleep study, is not a standard care for investigating FGR, and the diagnosis of OSA is rarely made in pregnancy; hence, the diagnosis is only made as a result of this study.\(^{23,24}\) (B) PAP is not a standard care for sleep disturbance in pregnancy as many practitioners and participants rightly or wrongly assume that this will improve after delivery.\(^{24}\) While PAP is seen as a long-term therapeutic intervention. After delivery, participants with AHI ≥5 will be given a standard IRB-approved letter along with their HSAT results. This information can be presented to their primary care physician for possible referral to a sleep specialist.

The trial steering committee is responsible for all major decisions regarding changes to the protocol. The committee communicates these changes to the IRB, the trial registry and appropriate parties. Data will be shared in keeping with the data sharing statement below. Dissemination plans include presentations at scientific conferences. The results of the SAFER trial will be published in a peer-reviewed journal. Dissemination of results to study participants and their family members will be available on request. Updates and results of the study will be available to the public at ClinicalTrials.gov.

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**Correction notice** This article has been corrected since it was first published. The study group name in the author list ‘the SAFER study group’ has been added.


**Contributors** Authorship for this study is given to key personnel involved in study design, recruitment, data collection and data analysis. There are no publication restrictions and no professional writers involved in the generation of the manuscript. AH is the site principle investigator for Washington University. JN is the site principle investigator for the University of Rochester. SK jointly conceived the study together with YG and EML. EC and SP are the overall advisors for maternal-fetal medicine. BW is the overall advisor for neonatal medicine. YESJ is the overall advisor for sleep medicine. ABA is the statistical consultant. EW is the overall study coordinator. EML is the overall study principle investigator, and jointly conceived the study together with YG and SK. YG is the site principle investigator for Hadassah Hebrew University, and jointly conceived the study together with SK and EML. YG, SK and EML wrote the grant that led to this study, and all authors jointly wrote this manuscript. All authors agree to be accountable for the accuracy and integrity of all aspects of the SAFER trial.

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**Disclaimer** The initiation, design, management, analysis and reporting of the study are entirely independent of both ResMed Research Foundation and ResMed Corporation, and the sole responsibility of the investigators.

**Competing interests** None declared.

**Patient consent for publication** Not required.

**Provenance and peer review** Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.

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**REFERENCES**

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INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction

Principal Investigator: Ellen Lockhart, MD

Research Team Contact: Liz Wilson 314-454-5967

This consent form describes the research study and helps you decide if you want to participate. It provides important information about what you will be asked to do during the study, about the risks and benefits of the study, and about your rights and responsibilities as a research participant. By signing this form you are agreeing to participate in this study.

• You should read and understand the information in this document including the procedures, risks and potential benefits.
• If you have questions about anything in this form, you should ask the research team for more information before you agree to participate.
• You may also wish to talk to your family or friends about your participation in this study.
• Do not agree to participate in this study unless the research team has answered your questions and you decide that you want to be part of this study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

This is a research study. We invite you to participate in this research study because you are approximately 22-31 weeks pregnant and have been diagnosed with FGR fetal growth restriction.

The purpose of this research study is to help us understand if autotitrated positive airway pressure (aPAP) can improve fetal growth in pregnant woman diagnosed with sleep apnea. aPAP is a machine that gently delivers pressurized air, via a mask, to keep your airways free of obstruction as you sleep. The air pressure delivered from the machines acts as a splint, keeping your throat open so that you can breathe freely through the night.

The aPAP machine is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of patients with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), central and/or mixed apneas or periodic breathing.

The home sleep monitoring device is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to aid in the diagnosis of sleep disordered breathing in adult patients.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?

If you decide to participate in this study, you will complete a sleep questionnaire either electronically or on paper. You may refuse to answer any question on the questionnaire that makes you uncomfortable, but it is possible that you might not be able to participate in the study, depending on which question it is. You will be provided with a home sleep monitoring device and instructed on how to use it.

Page 1 of 10
sleep monitor is a device that monitors your breathing while you sleep and determines whether or not you have sleep apnea. You will wear the sleep monitor for two consecutive nights and fill out a short sleep survey rating the quality of your sleep.

If the results of your home sleep test meet the study criteria, you will be eligible to advance to the final stage of the study, where you will be randomized to either receive an aPAP (auto-titrating positive airway pressure) device or no device.

If you are randomized to receive an aPAP device and mask, you will be expected to wear the device each night when you sleep for the duration of your pregnancy. The aPAP device will provide data to the study team to monitor compliance by indicating the number of hours each night that you wear the device. We will collect the data daily from the device electronically via an internal modem. The data transfers automatically and you do not have to do anything to make this happen. A member of the study team will remain in contact with you throughout the study to provide support and answer any questions or concerns you may have.

You will be provided with both paper instructions and educational videos for using the devices.

We will collect demographic data including name, date of birth, home address, phone number and email address, and clinical data such as your height, weight, medical history, expected due date, obstetric outcomes and fetal outcomes from your and your baby’s medical record.

We are looking for any connections between sleep apnea and low blood flow to your baby. It is routine practice for doctors of patients with fetal growth restriction to send the placenta to pathology for analysis. If you agree, we may take a small slice for our research study.

Please place your initials in the blank next to Yes or No for each of the questions below:

You may use a small slice of my placenta tissue to look for genes that might help us to understand markers of low blood flow to the placenta

_____ Yes _____ No
Initials Initials

After your baby is born, we would like to review their medical chart relating to their 18 – 24 month visit for the results of a routine test the pediatrician may do called the “Bayley Score.” The Bayley Score is an assessment of your child’s cognition, language and motor function.

Please place your initials in the blank next to Yes or No for each of the questions below:

You may check my child’s electronic medical record for their 18-24-month follow-up visit to access the Bayley Score.

_____ Yes _____ No
Initials Initials
After the study is complete, if the results of your home sleep test meet criteria you will be referred to your OB or PCP for a possible referral to a sleep physician.

**Will you save my research information and/or biospecimens to use in future research studies?**

We would like to use the data and tissue we are obtaining in this study for studies going on right now as well as studies that are conducted in the future. These studies may provide additional information that will be helpful in understanding fetal growth restriction, or other diseases or conditions, including research to develop investigational tests, treatments, drugs or devices that are not yet approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. It is unlikely that what we learn from these studies will have a direct benefit to you. There are no plans to provide financial compensation to you should this occur. By allowing us to use your data and tissue you give up any property rights you may have in the data and tissue.

We might remove identifiers from your private information and your data and tissue and then use the information and your data and tissue for future research studies or share them with other researchers for their future research. This future research may involve studying genes from your tissue samples. If this occurs we will not ask you for additional consent for these uses of your information or data and tissue.

We will share your data and tissue with other researchers. They may be doing research in areas similar to this research or in other unrelated areas. These researchers may be at Washington University, at other research centers and institutions, or industry sponsors of research. We may also share your research data with large data repositories (a repository is a database of information) for broad sharing with the research community. If your individual research data is placed in one of these repositories only qualified researchers, who have received prior approval from individuals that monitor the use of the data, will be able to look at your information.

Your data and tissue will be stored without your name or any other kind of link that would enable us to identify which sample(s) or data are yours. Therefore, it will be available for use in future research studies indefinitely and cannot be removed.

**HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?**

Approximately 34 people will take part in this study conducted by investigators at Washington University. Approximately 104 people will take part in the study worldwide.

**HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?**

If you agree to take part in this study, your physical involvement will last for the duration of your pregnancy, and long-term follow-up will conclude at 18-24 months with the collection of your baby’s Bayley scores from EMR.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?**

You may experience one or more of the risks indicated below from being in this study. In addition to these, there may be other unknown risks, or risks that we did not anticipate, associated with being in this study.
Home Sleep monitor: You may experience mild discomfort from the device and mild inconvenience.

APAP device: You may experience mild discomfort from the device and mild inconvenience. A properly functioning aPAP device will sense subtle changes in your breathing and adjust itself to the best pressure setting for you. If your machine is malfunctioning, you may not receive adequate pressure. We will be able to see this and can provide you with another. Other risks include:

1. Irritation of facial skin from the PAP mask (common, mild). A mask fitting will be performed by a registered sleep technologist, and if skin irritation occurs, you can return for further mask fittings.
2. Irritation and dryness of nasal passages (common, mild). Every PAP machine will be dispensed with a humidifier and filters to minimize irritation and dryness to the nasal passages.
3. Sensation of fullness in chest (rare, mild): Some individuals feel like the pressurized air from the PAP machine causes a sensation of fullness in the chest. This usually resolves spontaneously after several days of usage.
4. Worse sleep quality due to mask on face, noise from machine, or unfamiliar sleeping environment (common, mild). This usually resolves as a person gets accustomed to using PAP.

Genetic Research
There is a federal law called the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA). In general, this law makes it illegal for health insurance companies, group health plans and employers with greater than 15 employees to discriminate against you based on your genetic information. However, it does not protect you against discrimination by companies that sell life insurance, disability insurance or long term-care insurance.

Breach of Confidentiality
One risk of participating in this study is that confidential information about you may be accidentally disclosed. We will use our best efforts to keep the information about you secure. Please see the section in this consent form titled “How will you keep my information confidential?” for more information.
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You may or may not benefit from being in this study.

However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because we will gain a better understanding of treatment of obstructive sleep apnea during pregnancy.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

You and/or your medical/hospital insurance provider will remain responsible for your regular medical care expenses.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will be paid for being in this research study. You will need to provide your social security number (SSN) in order for us to pay you. You may choose to participate without being paid if you do not wish to provide your social security number (SSN) for this purpose. If your social security number is obtained for payment purposes only, it will not be retained for research purposes.

You will receive a $25 Target gift card upon completion of the home sleep study and return of the device. If you are eligible and randomized to wear an aPAP device, you will be given a $25 Target gift card for compliance and at $25 Target gift card following return of the device after delivery. You could receive up to $75 in Target gift cards if you complete the study and are compliant wearing the aPAP.

WHO IS FUNDING THIS STUDY?

The RESMED Foundation is funding this research study. This means that Washington University is receiving payments from the RESMED Foundation to support the activities that are required to conduct the study. No one on the research team will receive a direct payment or increase in salary from the RESMED Foundation for conducting this study.

WHAT IF I AM INJURED AS A RESULT OF THIS STUDY?

Washington University investigators and staff will try to reduce, control, and treat any complications from this research. If you feel you are injured because of the study, please contact the investigator Alex Hincker at 314-362-2628 and/or the Human Research Protection Office at 1-(800)-438-0445.

Decisions about whether payment for medical treatment for injuries relating to your participation in research will be made by Washington University. If you need to seek medical care for a research-related injury, please notify the investigator as soon as possible.
HOW WILL YOU KEEP MY INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL?

Other people such as those indicated below may become aware of your participation in this study and may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. Some of these records could contain information that personally identifies you. We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law.

- Government representatives (including the Office for Human Research Protections) to complete federal or state responsibilities
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- The RESMED Foundation
- Your primary care physician if a medical condition that needs urgent attention is discovered
- Hospital or University representatives to complete Hospital or University responsibilities
- Information about your participation in this study may be documented in your health care records and will be available to anyone with access to your health care record, including your health insurance company. This information may also be released as part of a release of information request.
- The last four digits of your social security number may be used in hospital or University systems to track billing information for research procedures.
- Washington University’s Institutional Review Board (a committee that oversees the conduct of research involving human participants) and the Human Research Protection Office. The Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved this study.
- Any report or article that we write will not include information that can directly identify you. The journals that publish these reports or articles require that we share your information that was collected for this study with others to make sure the results of this study are correct and help develop new ideas for research. Your information will be shared in a way that cannot directly identify you.

To help protect your confidentiality, we will have all paper documents locked in a filing cabinet in a locked office of a member of the study team. We will keep all electronic documents on secured servers that are password protected and have various state of the art firewall protections with frequent upgrades of these protections. Access to these electronic research files will be restricted to members of the research team and will be controlled by the principal investigator.

A description of this clinical trial will be available on http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov, as required by U.S. Law. This Web site will not include information that can identify you. At most, the Web site will include a summary of the results. You can search this Web site at any time.

Are there additional protections for my health information?

Protected Health Information (PHI) is health information that identifies you. PHI is protected by federal law under HIPAA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). To take part in this research, you must give the research team permission to use and disclose (share) your PHI for the study as explained in this consent form. The research team will follow state and federal laws and may share your health information with the agencies and people listed under the previous section titled, “How will you keep my information confidential?”
Once your health information is shared with someone outside of the research team, it may no longer be protected by HIPAA.

The research team will only use and share your information as talked about in this form or as permitted or required by law. When possible, the research team will make sure information cannot be linked to you (de-identified). Once information is de-identified, it may be used and shared for other purposes not discussed in this consent form. If you have questions or concerns about your privacy and the use of your PHI, please contact the University’s Privacy Officer at 866-747-4975.

Although you will not be allowed to see the study information, you may be given access to your health care records by contacting your health care provider.

**If you decide not to sign this form, it will not affect**
- your treatment or the care given by your health provider.
- your insurance payment or enrollment in any health plans.
- any benefits to which you are entitled.

However, it will not be possible for you to take part in the study.

**If you sign this form:**
- You authorize the use of your PHI for this research
- This authorization does not expire.
- You may later change your mind and not let the research team use or share your information (you may revoke your authorization).
  - To revoke your authorization, complete the withdrawal letter, found in the Participant section of the Human Research Protection Office website at [https://hrpo.wustl.edu/participants/withdrawing-from-a-study/](https://hrpo.wustl.edu/participants/withdrawing-from-a-study/) or you may request that the investigator send you a copy of the letter.
  - **If you revoke your authorization:**
    - The research team may only use and share information already collected for the study.
    - Your information may still be used and shared as necessary to maintain the integrity of the research, for example, to account for a participant’s withdrawal from the research study or for safety reasons.
    - You will not be allowed to continue to participate in the study.

**Can we contact you by email?**

We would like to contact you by email for the purposes listed below. Some of these emails may contain health information that identifies you.

- Patient education
- Appointment scheduling, which may contain PHI

Only the research team will have access to your email communications. We will only communicate by email to send you the information listed above. If you have any questions or need to contact us for an appointment or for any other reason, please call [phone number].

**02/05/2020**
urgent or emergent situation, please contact the research team member identified at the top of this document.

You should be aware that there are risks associated with sending your health information via email.

- There is always a risk that the message could be intercepted or sent to the wrong email address. To avoid sending messages to the wrong email address, the first email we send you will be a test message to ensure we have the correct email address.
- When using any computer you should be careful to protect your username and password. Make sure you log-out before getting up from the computer.
- If you share a home computer with other family members, and do not want them to know you are participating in this study make sure you provide an email address that only you can access.
- Your employer will have access to any email communications sent or received on any electronic devices used for work or through a work server.

Do you agree to allow us to send your health information via email?

_____ Yes  _____ No

Initials  Initials

IS BEING IN THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to be in this study, you may stop participating at any time. Any data that was collected as part of your participation in the study will remain as part of the study records and cannot be removed.

If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won’t be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

What if I decide to withdraw from the study?

You may withdraw by telling the study team you are no longer interested in participating in the study or you may send in a withdrawal letter. A sample withdrawal letter can be found at https://hrpo.wustl.edu/participants/withdrawing-from-a-study/ under Withdrawing from a Research Study.

If you decide to leave the study early, we will ask you to return the home sleep monitor and aPAP machines.

If you withdraw from the study we will ask your permission to continue to collect information from your health care records. Should this occur we will ask you to sign a separate consent form before collecting this information.

Will I receive new information about the study while participating?

If we obtain any new information during this study that might affect your willingness to continue participating in the study, we’ll promptly provide you with that information.

02/05/2020
**Can someone else end my participation in this study?**

Under certain circumstances, the investigator might decide to end your participation in this research study earlier than planned. This might happen for no reason or because in our judgment it would not be safe for you to continue, because funding for the research study has ended, because the sponsor has decided to stop the research.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

We encourage you to ask questions. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact: Liz Wilson 314-454-5967. If you experience a research-related injury, please contact: Alex Hincker at 314-362-2628.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Protection Office 1-(800)-438-0445, or email hrpo@wustl.edu. General information about being a research participant can be found on the Human Research Protection Office web site, http://hrpo.wustl.edu. To offer input about your experiences as a research participant or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Research Protection Office at the number above.
This consent form is not a contract. It is a written explanation of what will happen during the study if you decide to participate. You are not waiving any legal rights by agreeing to participate in this study. As a participant you have rights and responsibilities as described in this document and including:

- To be given enough time before signing below to weigh the risks and potential benefits and decide if you want to participate without any pressure from the research team or others.
- To understand all of the information included in the document, have your questions answered, and receive an explanation of anything you do not understand.
- To follow the procedures described in this document and the instructions of the research team to the best of your ability unless you choose to stop your participation in the research study.
- To give the research team accurate and complete information.
- To tell the research team promptly about any problems you have related to your participation, or if you are unable to continue and wish to stop participating in the research study.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a signed and dated copy of this form.

---

**Do not sign this form if today’s date is after $STAMP_EXP_DT.**

---

(Signature of Participant)  (Date)

(Staff member’s name – printed)

---

**Statement of Person Who Obtained Consent**

The information in this document has been discussed with the participant or, where appropriate, with the participant’s legally authorized representative. The participant has indicated that they understand the risks, benefits, and procedures involved with participation in this research study.

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(Signature of Person who Obtained Consent)  (Date)

(Staff member’s name – printed)
### University of Rochester / Strong Hospital - Birth weight nomogram

Local nomogram from 115,000 births in the nine-county Finger Lakes Region, 2004-2013. [60, 61]

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INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title:  Sleep Apnea and Fetal Growth Restriction

Principal Investigator:  Ellen Lockhart, MD

Research Team Contact:  Liz Wilson 314-454-5967

This consent form describes the research study and helps you decide if you want to participate. It provides important information about what you will be asked to do during the study, about the risks and benefits of the study, and about your rights and responsibilities as a research participant. By signing this form you are agreeing to participate in this study.

• You should read and understand the information in this document including the procedures, risks and potential benefits.
• If you have questions about anything in this form, you should ask the research team for more information before you agree to participate.
• You may also wish to talk to your family or friends about your participation in this study.
• Do not agree to participate in this study unless the research team has answered your questions and you decide that you want to be part of this study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

This is a research study. We invite you to participate in this research study because you are approximately 22-31 weeks pregnant and have been diagnosed with FGR fetal growth restriction.

The purpose of this research study is to help us understand if autotitrated positive airway pressure (aPAP) can improve fetal growth in pregnant woman diagnosed with sleep apnea. aPAP is a machine that gently delivers pressurized air, via a mask, to keep your airways free of obstruction as you sleep. The air pressure delivered from the machines acts as a splint, keeping your throat open so that you can breathe freely through the night.

The aPAP machine is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of patients with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), central and/or mixed apneas or periodic breathing.

The home sleep monitoring device is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to aid in the diagnosis of sleep disordered breathing in adult patients.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?

If you decide to participate in this study, you will complete a sleep questionnaire either electronically or on paper. You may refuse to answer any question on the questionnaire that makes you uncomfortable, but it is possible that you might not be able to participate in the study, depending on which question it is. You will be provided with a home sleep monitoring device and instructed on how to use it.
sleep monitor is a device that monitors your breathing while you sleep and determines whether or not you have sleep apnea. You will wear the sleep monitor for two consecutive nights and fill out a short sleep survey rating the quality of your sleep.

If the results of your home sleep test meet the study criteria, you will be eligible to advance to the final stage of the study, where you will be randomized to either receive an aPAP (auto-titrating positive airway pressure) device or no device.

If you are randomized to receive an aPAP device and mask, you will be expected to wear the device each night when you sleep for the duration of your pregnancy. The aPAP device will provide data to the study team to monitor compliance by indicating the number of hours each night that you wear the device. We will collect the data daily from the device electronically via an internal modem. The data transfers automatically and you do not have to do anything to make this happen. A member of the study team will remain in contact with you throughout the study to provide support and answer any questions or concerns you may have.

You will be provided with both paper instructions and educational videos for using the devices.

We will collect demographic data including name, date of birth, home address, phone number and email address, and clinical data such as your height, weight, medical history, expected due date, obstetric outcomes and fetal outcomes from your and your baby’s medical record.

We are looking for any connections between sleep apnea and low blood flow to your baby. It is routine practice for doctors of patients with fetal growth restriction to send the placenta to pathology for analysis. If you agree, we may take a small slice for our research study.

Please place your initials in the blank next to Yes or No for each of the questions below:

You may use a small slice of my placenta tissue to look for genes that might help us to understand markers of low blood flow to the placenta

_____ Yes  _____ No
Initials  Initials

After your baby is born, we would like to review their medical chart relating to their 18 – 24 month visit for the results of a routine test the pediatrician may do called the “Bayley Score.” The Bayley Score is an assessment of your child’s cognition, language and motor function.

Please place your initials in the blank next to Yes or No for each of the questions below:

You may check my child’s electronic medical record for their 18-24-month follow-up visit to access the Bayley Score.

_____ Yes  _____ No
Initials  Initials
After the study is complete, if the results of your home sleep test meet criteria you will be referred to your OB or PCP for a possible referral to a sleep physician.

**Will you save my research information and/or biospecimens to use in future research studies?**

We would like to use the data and tissue we are obtaining in this study for studies going on right now as well as studies that are conducted in the future. These studies may provide additional information that will be helpful in understanding fetal growth restriction, or other diseases or conditions, including research to develop investigational tests, treatments, drugs or devices that are not yet approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. It is unlikely that what we learn from these studies will have a direct benefit to you. There are no plans to provide financial compensation to you should this occur. By allowing us to use your data and tissue you give up any property rights you may have in the data and tissue.

We might remove identifiers from your private information and your data and tissue and then use the information and your data and tissue for future research studies or share them with other researchers for their future research. This future research may involve studying genes from your tissue samples. If this occurs we will not ask you for additional consent for these uses of your information or data and tissue.

We will share your data and tissue with other researchers. They may be doing research in areas similar to this research or in other unrelated areas. These researchers may be at Washington University, at other research centers and institutions, or industry sponsors of research. We may also share your research data with large data repositories (a repository is a database of information) for broad sharing with the research community. If your individual research data is placed in one of these repositories only qualified researchers, who have received prior approval from individuals that monitor the use of the data, will be able to look at your information.

Your data and tissue will be stored without your name or any other kind of link that would enable us to identify which sample(s) or data are yours. Therefore, it will be available for use in future research studies indefinitely and cannot be removed.

**HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?**

Approximately 34 people will take part in this study conducted by investigators at Washington University. Approximately 104 people will take part in the study worldwide.

**HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?**

If you agree to take part in this study, your physical involvement will last for the duration of your pregnancy, and long-term follow-up will conclude at 18-24 months with the collection of your baby’s Bayley scores from EMR.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?**

You may experience one or more of the risks indicated below from being in this study. In addition to these, there may be other unknown risks, or risks that we did not anticipate, associated with being in this

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study.

**Home Sleep monitor:** You may experience mild discomfort from the device and mild inconvenience.

**APAP device:** You may experience mild discomfort from the device and mild inconvenience. A properly functioning aPAP device will sense subtle changes in your breathing and adjust itself to the best pressure setting for you. If your machine is malfunctioning, you many not receive adequate pressure. We will be able to see this and can provide you with another. Other risks include:

1. Irritation of facial skin from the PAP mask (common, mild). A mask fitting will be performed by a registered sleep technologist, and if skin irritation occurs, you can return for further mask fittings.
2. Irritation and dryness of nasal passages (common, mild). Every PAP machine will be dispensed with a humidifier and filters to minimize irritation and dryness to the nasal passages.
3. Sensation of fullness in chest (rare, mild): Some individuals feel like the pressurized air from the PAP machine causes a sensation of fullness in the chest. This usually resolves spontaneously after several days of usage.
4. Worse sleep quality due to mask on face, noise from machine, or unfamiliar sleeping environment (common, mild). This usually resolves as a person gets accustomed to using PAP.

**Genetic Research**
There is a federal law called the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA). In general, this law makes it illegal for health insurance companies, group health plans and employers with greater than 15 employees to discriminate against you based on your genetic information. However, it does not protect you against discrimination by companies that sell life insurance, disability insurance or long term-care insurance.

**Breach of Confidentiality**
One risk of participating in this study is that confidential information about you may be accidentally disclosed. We will use our best efforts to keep the information about you secure. Please see the section in this consent form titled “How will you keep my information confidential?” for more information.
**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?**

You may or may not benefit from being in this study.

However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because we will gain a better understanding of treatment of obstructive sleep apnea during pregnancy.

**WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?**

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

You and/or your medical/hospital insurance provider will remain responsible for your regular medical care expenses.

**WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?**

You will be paid for being in this research study. You will need to provide your social security number (SSN) in order for us to pay you. You may choose to participate without being paid if you do not wish to provide your social security number (SSN) for this purpose. If your social security number is obtained for payment purposes only, it will not be retained for research purposes.

You will receive a $25 Target gift card upon completion of the home sleep study and return of the device. If you are eligible and randomized to wear an aPAP device, you will be given a $25 Target gift card for compliance and at $25 Target gift card following return of the device after delivery. You could receive up to $75 in Target gift cards if you complete the study and are compliant wearing the aPAP.

**WHO IS FUNDING THIS STUDY?**

The RESMED Foundation is funding this research study. This means that Washington University is receiving payments from the RESMED Foundation to support the activities that are required to conduct the study. No one on the research team will receive a direct payment or increase in salary from the RESMED Foundation for conducting this study.

**WHAT IF I AM INJURED AS A RESULT OF THIS STUDY?**

Washington University investigators and staff will try to reduce, control, and treat any complications from this research. If you feel you are injured because of the study, please contact the investigator Alex Hincker at 314-362-2628 and/or the Human Research Protection Office at 1-(800)-438-0445.

Decisions about whether payment for medical treatment for injuries relating to your participation in research will be made by Washington University. If you need to seek medical care for a research-related injury, please notify the investigator as soon as possible.
HOW WILL YOU KEEP MY INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL?

Other people such as those indicated below may become aware of your participation in this study and may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. Some of these records could contain information that personally identifies you. We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law.

- Government representatives (including the Office for Human Research Protections) to complete federal or state responsibilities
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- The RESMEDI Foundation
- Your primary care physician if a medical condition that needs urgent attention is discovered
- Hospital or University representatives to complete Hospital or University responsibilities
- Information about your participation in this study may be documented in your health care records and will be available to anyone with access to your health care record, including your health insurance company. This information may also be released as part of a release of information request.
- The last four digits of your social security number may be used in hospital or University systems to track billing information for research procedures.
- Washington University’s Institutional Review Board (a committee that oversees the conduct of research involving human participants) and the Human Research Protection Office. The Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved this study.
- Any report or article that we write will not include information that can directly identify you. The journals that publish these reports or articles require that we share your information that was collected for this study with others to make sure the results of this study are correct and help develop new ideas for research. Your information will be shared in a way that cannot directly identify you.

To help protect your confidentiality, we will have all paper documents locked in a filing cabinet in a locked office of a member of the study team. We will keep all electronic documents on secured servers that are password protected and have various state of the art firewall protections with frequent upgrades of these protections. Access to these electronic research files will be restricted to members of the research team and will be controlled by the principal investigator.

A description of this clinical trial will be available on http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov, as required by U.S. Law. This Web site will not include information that can identify you. At most, the Web site will include a summary of the results. You can search this Web site at any time.

Are there additional protections for my health information?

Protected Health Information (PHI) is health information that identifies you. PHI is protected by federal law under HIPAA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). To take part in this research, you must give the research team permission to use and disclose (share) your PHI for the study as explained in this consent form. The research team will follow state and federal laws and may share your health information with the agencies and people listed under the previous section titled, “How will you keep my information confidential?”
Once your health information is shared with someone outside of the research team, it may no longer be protected by HIPAA.

The research team will only use and share your information as talked about in this form or as permitted or required by law. When possible, the research team will make sure information cannot be linked to you (de-identified). Once information is de-identified, it may be used and shared for other purposes not discussed in this consent form. If you have questions or concerns about your privacy and the use of your PHI, please contact the University’s Privacy Officer at 866-747-4975.

Although you will not be allowed to see the study information, you may be given access to your health care records by contacting your health care provider.

**If you decide not to sign this form, it will not affect**
- your treatment or the care given by your health provider.
- your insurance payment or enrollment in any health plans.
- any benefits to which you are entitled.

However, it will not be possible for you to take part in the study.

**If you sign this form:**
- You authorize the use of your PHI for this research
- This authorization does not expire.
- You may later change your mind and not let the research team use or share your information (you may revoke your authorization).
  - To revoke your authorization, complete the withdrawal letter, found in the Participant section of the Human Research Protection Office website at [https://hrpo.wustl.edu/participants/withdrawing-from-a-study/](https://hrpo.wustl.edu/participants/withdrawing-from-a-study/) or you may request that the investigator send you a copy of the letter.
    - **If you revoke your authorization:**
      - The research team may only use and share information already collected for the study.
      - Your information may still be used and shared as necessary to maintain the integrity of the research, for example, to account for a participant’s withdrawal from the research study or for safety reasons.
      - You will not be allowed to continue to participate in the study.

**Can we contact you by email?**

We would like to contact you by email for the purposes listed below. Some of these emails may contain health information that identifies you.

- Patient education
- Appointment scheduling, which may contain PHI

Only the research team will have access to your email communications. We will only communicate by email to send you the information listed above. If you have any questions or need to contact us for an

02/05/2020
urgent or emergent situation, please contact the research team member identified at the top of this
document.

You should be aware that there are risks associated with sending your health information via email.
- There is always a risk that the message could be intercepted or sent to the wrong email
  address. To avoid sending messages to the wrong email address, the first email we send you
  will be a test message to ensure we have the correct email address.
- When using any computer you should be careful to protect your username and password.
  Make sure you log-out before getting up from the computer.
- If you share a home computer with other family members, and do not want them to know you
  are participating in this study make sure you provide an email address that only you can
  access.
- Your employer will have access to any email communications sent or received on any
  electronic devices used for work or through a work server.

Do you agree to allow us to send your health information via email?

_____ Yes  _____ No

Initials  Initials

IS BEING IN THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If
you decide to be in this study, you may stop participating at any time. Any data that was collected as
part of your participation in the study will remain as part of the study records and cannot be removed.

If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won’t be penalized or
lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

What if I decide to withdraw from the study?

You may withdraw by telling the study team you are no longer interested in participating in the study or
you may send in a withdrawal letter. A sample withdrawal letter can be found at
https://hrpo.wustl.edu/participants/withdrawing-from-a-study/ under Withdrawing from a Research
Study.

If you decide to leave the study early, we will ask you to return the home sleep monitor and aPAP
machines.

If you withdraw from the study we will ask your permission to continue to collect information from your
health care records. Should this occur we will ask you to sign a separate consent form before collecting
this information.

Will I receive new information about the study while participating?

If we obtain any new information during this study that might affect your willingness to continue
participating in the study, we’ll promptly provide you with that information.

02/05/2020
**Can someone else end my participation in this study?**

Under certain circumstances, the investigator might decide to end your participation in this research study earlier than planned. This might happen for no reason or because in our judgment it would not be safe for you to continue, because funding for the research study has ended, because the sponsor has decided to stop the research.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

We encourage you to ask questions. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact: Liz Wilson 314-454-5967. If you experience a research-related injury, please contact: Alex Hincker at 314-362-2628.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Protection Office 1-(800)-438-0445, or email hrpo@wustl.edu. General information about being a research participant can be found on the Human Research Protection Office web site, [http://hrpo.wustl.edu](http://hrpo.wustl.edu). To offer input about your experiences as a research participant or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Research Protection Office at the number above.
This consent form is not a contract. It is a written explanation of what will happen during the study if you decide to participate. You are not waiving any legal rights by agreeing to participate in this study. As a participant you have rights and responsibilities as described in this document and including:

- To be given enough time before signing below to weigh the risks and potential benefits and decide if you want to participate without any pressure from the research team or others.
- To understand all of the information included in the document, have your questions answered, and receive an explanation of anything you do not understand.
- To follow the procedures described in this document and the instructions of the research team to the best of your ability unless you choose to stop your participation in the research study.
- To give the research team accurate and complete information.
- To tell the research team promptly about any problems you have related to your participation, or if you are unable to continue and wish to stop participating in the research study.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a signed and dated copy of this form.

**Do not sign this form if today’s date is after $STAMP_EXP_DT.**

(Signature of Participant)       (Date)

(Participant's name – printed)

**Statement of Person Who Obtained Consent**

The information in this document has been discussed with the participant or, where appropriate, with the participant’s legally authorized representative. The participant has indicated that they understand the risks, benefits, and procedures involved with participation in this research study.

(Signature of Person who Obtained Consent)       (Date)

(Name of Person who Obtained Consent - printed)
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Local nomogram from 115,000 births in the nine-county Finger Lakes Region, 2004-2013. [60, 61]

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