

What you need to know about Sleep Disorders...

Sleep is essential to our health, well-being, and safety. More than one-third of our entire life is spent sleeping. It is the quality of sleep which ultimately affects the quality of our life.

- The National Commission on Sleep Disorders Research estimates that 40 million Americans are chronically ill with sleep disorders and that an additional 20-30 million experience intermittent sleep-related problems.
- 95% of these people remain undiagnosed and untreated.
- Sleep disorders can be life-threatening.

If you are sleeping 7-8 hours per night and are still tired during the day, you might have a sleep disorder of which you may be completely unaware. The most common sleep disorder is Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome.

What is Obstructive Sleep Apnea — O.S.A.?

O.S.A. is the most common form of sleep-disordered breathing. It occurs when the muscles of the upper airway partially or completely collapse during sleep, resulting in closing of the airway. Signs include: snoring, snorting, gasping, pauses in breathing, and choking.

People with O.S.A. may wake either partially or completely, as many as several hundred times a night, causing sleep deprivation and daytime sleepiness. This repeated struggle to breathe throughout the night makes restful sleep impossible. An evaluation in a sleep laboratory may improve your health and possibly save your life.

Symptoms of Sleep Disorders

If you or someone you know has one or more of the following symptoms, a sleep disorder may be the cause.

- Snore frequently
- High blood pressure
- Overweight
- Morning headaches
- Wake up in the morning feeling non-refreshed
- Difficulty concentrating and completing tasks at work
- Feel sleepy during the day
- Feel sleepy or doze off while watching TV, reading, driving, or while engaged in daily activities
- Awaken at night, gasping for air or choking
- Kicking or twitching movements while asleep
- Pauses in breathing while you sleep
- Have fallen asleep while driving

These are all symptoms of a sleep disorder. If you have any of them, make an appointment to discuss this with your primary care physician or other medical provider. After ruling out other possible medical problems, your doctor may suggest that you have an evaluation at a sleep laboratory.

Treatment

There are options for treatment available for those who have been diagnosed with Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Successful treatment can prevent or reverse potential life-threatening complications and improve the quality of your life. The benefits of proper treatment include:

- Improved feeling of well-being
- Improved work performance
- Improved health
- Improved memory
- Decreased risks for heart problems, high blood pressure, and stroke

Dangers of Untreated Obstructive Sleep Apnea

- High blood pressure
- Serious heart conditions
- Stroke
- Depression
- Impotence
- Memory loss
- Increased motor vehicle or work accidents

Information

For further information regarding testing and treatment for sleep disorders, talk with your physician.

Epworth Sleepiness Scale

How likely are you to doze off or fall asleep in the following situations, in contrast to feeling just tired? Please complete **all** of the questions — even if you have not done some of these things recently.

Use the following scale to choose the most appropriate number for each situation:

- 0 would never doze
- 1 slight chance of dozing
- 2 moderate chance of dozing
- 3 high chance of dozing

Situation	Chance of Dozing
Sitting and reading	_____
Watching TV	_____
Sitting, inactively, in a public place (<i>i.e., theater or meeting</i>)	_____
As a passenger in a car for an hour without a break	_____
Lying down to rest in the afternoon, when circumstances permit	_____
Sitting and talking to someone	_____
Sitting quietly after lunch without alcohol	_____
In a car, while stopped for a few minutes in traffic	_____
	Total

Who should be referred for a sleep study?

Patients with complaints of excessive daytime sleepiness (E.D.S.), tiredness (fatigue), and symptoms/signs of obstructive sleep apnea.

Common symptoms and signs of obstructive sleep apnea include:

- Daytime sleepiness
- Snoring
- Witnessed apnea
- Obesity
- Hypertension
- Large neck (Male >17") (Female >16")
- Shallow or narrow posterior oropharynx
- Morning headaches
- Depressed mood
- Snorting, gasping, or choking during sleep

Evaluate Sleepiness, using the Epworth Sleepiness Scale

Total = 8-10 — Mild Sleepiness

Total = 11-15 — Moderate Sleepiness

Total = >16 — Severe Sleepiness