

## Sleep Disorders

### a. Sleep Apnea

Definition – Sleep apnea is the occurrence of periods of time when you stop breathing while you are asleep. These periods can be as brief as ten seconds, but are sometimes much longer. When you stop breathing, you do not get the oxygen that your body needs and will also awaken – momentarily – just before you start breathing normally again. This can occur hundreds of times throughout the night and can keep you from getting the restful sleep you need.

#### i. Signs and Symptoms

- Snoring, interrupted by pauses in breathing
- Gasping or choking during sleep
- Restless sleep
- Excessive sleepiness or fatigue during the day
- Poor judgement or concentration
- Irritability
- Memory loss
- High blood pressure
- Depression
- Obesity
- Large neck size (>17” in men; >16” in women)
- Crowded airway
- Morning headache
- Sexual dysfunction
- Frequent urination at night

#### ii. Dangers of going untreated – Sleep apnea is a serious disorder that robs its victims of restful sleep and may cause considerable health problems. It can decrease the quality of life for anyone who goes untreated. When left untreated, the disorder can lead to serious consequences such as:

- Increased risk of heart problems
- Increased risk of stroke
- Increased risk of high blood pressure
- Motor vehicle accidents or accidents at work

#### iii. Treatment options

- Sleep hygiene improvement
- Body position retraining
- C-pap or Bi-pap
- Surgery

#### iv. Links

- American Academy of Sleep Medicine, [www.aasmnet.org](http://www.aasmnet.org)
- Somnos Sleep Lab, [www.somnos.com](http://www.somnos.com)
- Respiroics, [www.respiroics.com/patients/patients\\_1a\\_1b\\_article.html](http://www.respiroics.com/patients/patients_1a_1b_article.html)
- Respiroics, [www.respiroics.com](http://www.respiroics.com)

- Healthdyne Technologies, [www.healthdyne.com](http://www.healthdyne.com)

If you have a sleep study evaluation appointment with our office, please go to the forms tab on this website and download the sleep evaluation form, complete it and bring it with you to your appointment.

**b. Restless Leg Syndrome**

- i. Definition – This disorder appears in otherwise healthy people, is not related to emotional or psychological disorders. Although it affects mostly the legs, as the name suggests, it can also affect the arms. People experience restless legs in many different ways, but all describe very unpleasant “creepy, crawly” sensations that occur in the legs when they are sitting or lying still, especially at bedtime.
- ii. Links
  - Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation, [www.rls.org](http://www.rls.org)
  - American Academy of Sleep Medicine, [www.aasmnet.org](http://www.aasmnet.org)

**c. Narcolepsy**

- i. Definition – Narcolepsy is a sleep disorder defined by constant sleepiness and a tendency to sleep at inappropriate times.
- ii. Signs and Symptoms
  - Excessive daytime sleepiness
  - Cataplexy (sudden loss of strength in muscles)
  - Sleep paralysis
  - Hypnagogic hallucinations (hallucinations that occur just before falling asleep, during naps, and/or on waking up).
- iii. Treatment options
  - Medication
  - Behavior treatment
- iv. Links
  - American Academy of Sleep Medicine, [www.aasmnet.org](http://www.aasmnet.org)

**d. Insomnia**

- i. Definition – Trouble falling asleep – commonly termed insomnia – plagues one in three American adults. If you suffer from insomnia, it disturbs your waking hours as well as your sleeping hours, since you’re likely to feel sleepy during the day and have trouble concentrating on tasks after a poor nights sleep.
- ii. Links
  - American Academy of Sleep Medicine, [www.aasmnet.org](http://www.aasmnet.org)