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Greetings!

We hope your summer has been full of sunshine, time outdoors, and time shared with family and friends. We look forward to seeing you in the upcoming fall. As you settle down from vacations and summer camps, we ask that you take a minute to think about your family and loved ones' health and wellness. This includes their sleep health.

Sleep is an extremely important pillar in your overall health. Insufficient quality sleep can cause heart complications, high blood pressure, depression, weight gain, and in severe cases, death. At our practice we take a strong interest in the overall health of our patients, beyond oral care.

We now know one of the most common sleep disorders is sleep apnea. The visible symptoms of the sleep related breathing disorder are: daily fatigue, morning headache, weight gain, long neck circumference, bruxing, and snoring.

In this month's newsletter you'll read about recent medical findings on the dangers of untreated sleep apnea. These articles show the relationship between sleep cycle interruption and mental-health conditions and the life threatening severity of sleep apnea.

If you or someone you know suffers from any symptoms please call us immediately for a free sleep consultation. We look forward to hearing from you and helping you find relief with a sleep related breathing disorder.



Can Sleep Apnea Cause Death

By: Paul A. Achoa on July 4, 2012

Millions of Americans suffer from what's called maintenance insomnia, which leads them to wake frequently throughout the night. While this problem can be caused by a variety of factors, it's sometimes stems from an underlying sleep disorder, such as OSA. While many consider this condition to be nothing but a troubling nuisance, more and more studies are suggesting that sleep apnea can cause death both directly and indirectly.

Sudden Death

OSA gained a lot of attention back in 2004, when Hall of Fame NFL football player, Reggie White died suddenly in his sleep at age 43. Although medical examiners ultimately attributed his death to cardiac and pulmonary sarcoidosis, they speculated that sleep apnea might have been partly to blame. Although rare, experts agree that it is possible for a sleep apneic to die in his or her sleep due to a lack of oxygen.

Long-term Health Risks

More and more studies suggest that OSA could ultimately kill sufferers by gradually damaging their health. This dangerous sleep disorder has been linked to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes and dementia, all of which can affect mortality. Furthermore, a recent study suggests that sleep apneics are at a five times greater risk of developing cancer than those who do not suffer from the disorder.

How Many People Have OSA?

While it's clear that sleep apnea can cause death, it's not necessarily clear how many people suffer from the sleep disorder. According to one prominent researcher, as much as 85 percent of so-called "clinically significant" sleep apneics have yet to be diagnosed. This is leading some to call OSA a silent killer, especially since many people don't even know they have the problem in the first place. *(Continued on page 2)*

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What Can People Do?

If you are experiencing common symptoms associated with OSA, including snoring, daytime fatigue and frequent waking, a sleep physician can help. Generally, you will be asked to do an overnight sleep study; however, some physicians are now using at-home sleep studies that prove just as reliable. If you are positively diagnosed, you have a pair of options: most patients receive CPAP treatments, which provide a constant source of oxygen throughout the night; on the other hand, some patients find relief when they use an oral appliance, which is used to clear the airway by adjusting the jaw.

<http://kingofhowto.com/sleep-apnea-cause-death-5743>

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Sleeping for Sanity

Source: Summarized from HERWriter an article by By Mamta Singh

Recent studies have shown that many Americans are finding it harder and harder to get a decent amount of sleep, but why? Studies have pointed to physical issues, like obstructive sleep apnea, as well as mental health issues, like stress and depression.

It's been proven that losing weight can greatly improve symptoms of sleep apnea. But what about treating mental health issues? In a question similar to the "chicken versus the egg" conundrum, could sleep problems traditionally thought to be symptoms of mental disorders actually be the cause of the mental disorders? Could treating sleep disorders help heal mental health problems?

Sleep Basics

It's obvious that our bodies and minds want and need sleep, but what exactly is happening when we start snoozing? According to the Harvard Medical School, there are two main categories of sleep, each with its own important functions. During rapid eye movement, or REM sleep, heart rate and breathing return to levels comparable to those seen when awake. At the same time, our bodies become paralyzed, ensuring that we don't act out our dreams. This period of dreaming has been shown to contribute to emotional well-being, memory and learning ability, though the manner of connection is not yet entirely understood.

When in "quiet," or non-REM sleep cycles, heart rate and body temperature decrease and breathing slows and becomes regular. In this stage the immune system is bolstered and strengthened.

Sleeping builds our immune system and can even contribute to maintaining a healthy weight. According to the NSF, "If sleep is cut short, the body doesn't have time to complete all of the phases needed for muscle repair, memory consolidation and release of hormones regulating growth and appetite."

Furthermore, it seems that the disruption of sleep affects stress hormones and neurotransmitters, interrupting one's ability to think, process information, and regulate their emotions. It is because of this mechanism of sleep that, according to Harvard Medical School, "insomnia may amplify the effects of psychiatric disorders, and vice versa." Harvard Medical School reports that while 10-18% of American adults overall are affected by chronic sleep issues, anywhere from 50-80% of patients in an average psychiatric practice are plagued with these problems.

The Sleep-Mental Health Connection

It has traditionally been the assumption that insomnia and other sleep problems were simply symptoms of the psychiatric issues that these patients with sleep issues were already being treated for. "The medical profession is becoming more aware of the correlation between sleep and emotional disorders," said William Kohler, M.D., Medical Director of the Florida Sleep Institute, in an interview with dailyRx. Some research has now shown that sleep issues might increase the likelihood of mental health problems. Harvard Medical school reports that it might even be the case that sleep problems "might even directly contribute to the development of some psychiatric disorders."