

Patient Information about Sleep Disorders

<http://www.neurologychannel.com/patient-information-sleep-disorders/index.shtml>

Sleep plays an important role in health and sleep disorders and sleep deprivation can have a significant impact on daily life. A chronic lack of sleep can increase the risk for accidents, injuries, and illnesses; can contribute to several medical problems, including high blood pressure and heart disease; and can interfere with people's ability to function at their best. Common sleep disorders include sleep apnea (OSA), insomnia, restless legs syndrome (RLS), and narcolepsy.

Sleeping disorder diagnosis often involves a sleep study performed in a sleep center, also is called a sleep lab or sleep clinic. Symptoms of sleep disorders include an inability to fall or stay asleep, even when tired; awaking frequently during the night; excessive daytime sleepiness; and heavy snoring.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., sleep specialist) about sleep disorders and sleep disorder treatment. **Print this page**, check the questions you would like answered, and bring it with you to your next appointment. Sleep disorders usually can be managed and information about the conditions can make it easier to develop an effective sleep plan and result in more restful sleep.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Sleep Disorders

- Why is sleep so important to good health?
- What are the common risk factors for sleep disorders?
- About how many hours of sleep should I be getting each night?
- Can you explain the different stages of sleep and what happens during each sleep stage?
- Why do you suspect that I have a sleep disorder?
- What type of sleeping disorder do you suspect that I have?
- Why do you suspect this condition?
- What are the common symptoms of this sleep disorder?
- Might this sleeping disorder result in short-term or long-term health effects or complications?
- If so, what types of health effects can occur?

- What do you suspect is the underlying cause for my sleep disorder?
- Might lifestyle changes, such as exercising, losing weight, and avoiding caffeine help improve my sleep?
- What is a sleep diary? Might it be helpful for me to keep this type of record?
- Do you recommend that I undergo a sleep study at a sleep center, sleep clinic, or sleep lab? Why or why not?
- What types of sleep tests will be performed to diagnose my condition?
- What are the benefits, disadvantages, and possible risks associated with sleep tests?
- How should I prepare for these tests?
- What do tests such as polysomnography and overnight oximetry involve?
- Do you recommend treatment for my sleep disorder? Why or why not?
- If so, what type of treatment do you recommend?
- If this treatment is unsuccessful, what other treatment options are available?
- Might over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription sleep aids be helpful?
- What are some of the possible side effects of these sleep medicines?
- What should I do if I experience severe side effects? **Telephone number to call:**
- How can I avoid developing a dependency on sleep medications?
- What does continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) involve?
- Might I benefit from this type of treatment? Why or why not?
- Do you recommend that I participate in a clinical trial for people with sleep disorders? Why or why not?
- Can sleep disorders usually be prevented? If so, what does sleep disorder prevention involve?

- Can you recommend a local or online support group for people with sleep disorders?
- Can you recommend additional resources for information about sleep disorders?
- Next appointment:** Date: Time:

Notes/Additional Information