

## SOUTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA HEALTH CARE QUALITY UNIT

# IT'S YOUR HEALTH WINTER 2010



Toll Free 1-877-315-6855  
www.theadvocacyalliance.org



### BED BUGS!

Bed bugs have been around for thousands of years, but their existence was diminished in the 1940's by the use of a very harmful pesticide called DDT. It is believed that with the increase in international travel and the banning of the use of DDT, these unwanted guests have seen a dramatic increase in population. Bedbugs are more frequently found in places with a high turnover of overnight guests—such as hospitals, hotels, and homeless shelters. Adult bedbugs are reddish-brown, flat, oval-shaped and are approximately the size of an apple seed. A nymph bedbug is clear in color and

may appear red after feeding.

#### Here are some facts about bed bugs:

- Bed bugs feed mainly at night, and hide during day. Both adult and nymph bedbugs suck blood, and humans are their preferred host.
- When they hide during the day, they usually are near sleeping areas — in cracks in walls, behind baseboards, under mattresses, in box springs, in furniture, under wallpaper or pictures, in drapes, under rugs, under window or door frames.
- At one time, bed bugs were primarily found most often in barracks, camps, jails, rooming houses, homeless shelters, old hotels, other shared sleeping quarters. Today, bedbugs are found in hotels, apartments, schools, private homes, but they can also infest hospitals, nursing homes, trains, planes, buses, cruise ships, theaters, moving vans, etc.
- Leave dark fecal spots on mattresses, bed clothes, clothing, and even walls, ceiling, and other surfaces.
- Scent glands emit a "sickly sweet" odor.
- Bed bugs travel up to twenty feet to feed, and occasionally much further.
- Can go for months between feedings.
- Often transported to new locations in luggage, used beds or bedding, secondhand furniture, or clothing.
- Can migrate from one room or apartment unit to the next through pipe and wiring runs, in wall and ceiling voids, much as cockroaches move.
- Painless bite can leave an itchy welt, and their feeding does not spread any diseases.

#### How do you get rid of them?

- The most important factor in treating an infestation is working with a reputable pest control company and requesting a written integrated pest management (IPM) plan from them.
- No single indoor insecticide is capable of eliminating an infestation.
- Bed bugs are killed at 114-115° or temperatures below freezing.

#### Online resources for more information:

<http://www.techletter.com/Top%2010%20pests/bedbug.html>  
<http://www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef636.asp>  
[http://www.nchh.org/Portals/0/Contents/Bed\\_Bug\\_Report\\_2-12-10.pdf](http://www.nchh.org/Portals/0/Contents/Bed_Bug_Report_2-12-10.pdf)  
[http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/bed\\_bugs/files/bed\\_bug.pdf](http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/bed_bugs/files/bed_bug.pdf)  
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12133597/>

\*Information/Facts for this article found at MayoClinic.com and the above web resources.



# Join Me for a Cup of Tea

## January is National Hot Tea Month

Gathering together for tea has long been a proper practice but the benefits of tea go far beyond the warm, soothing taste and the conversation that is created around an afternoon of tea and scones. Consider these reasons why you might be helping your health as you sip away.



**Tea contains antioxidants.** Tea helps protect your body from aging, the effects of pollution and help your cells to regenerate and repair.

**Tea contains less caffeine than coffee.** Coffee, with 135mg of caffeine per cup, has two to three times the caffeine of tea.

**Tea may reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.** Tea may help keep your arteries smooth and clot-free. A study in the Netherlands found a 70% lower risk of fatal heart attack in people who drank at least two to three cups of black tea daily compared to non-tea drinkers.

**Tea protects your bones.** A study comparing tea drinkers and non-tea drinkers, found that those who drank tea for ten or more years had the strongest bones. This study suggested that this may be an affect of tea's many beneficial phytochemicals.

**Tea gives you a sweet smile.** Tea contains fluoride and tannins that may keep plaque at bay. Unsweetened tea is best to keep the sugar from contributing to decay.

**Tea may help your body's immune system to fight off infection.** When 21 volunteers drank either five cups of tea or coffee each day for four weeks, researchers saw higher immune system activity in the blood of the tea drinkers.

**Tea protects against cancer.** The antioxidants, polyphenols, in tea, for their cancer-fighting effects. Recent research has suggested that lung, prostate and breast cancer see the biggest drop when green tea is consumed regularly.

**Tea helps to keep you hydrated.** Tea and other caffeinated beverages definitely contribute to our fluid needs, but caffeine becomes a problem when you drink more than five or six cups of a caffeinated beverage at one time.

**Tea increases your metabolism.** Green tea has been shown to actually increase metabolic rate so that you can burn 70 to 80 additional calories by drinking just five cups of green tea per day. Over one year, that equates to losing eight pounds just by drinking green tea!

**Tea can create a calmer but more alert state of mind.** Studies have shown that an amino acid found in the tea plant alters the attention networks in the brain and can have demonstrable effects on the brain waves. Simply stated, tea can help you relax and concentrate more fully on tasks.



**Tea lowers stress hormone levels.** Black tea has been shown to reduce the effects of a stressful event. Participants in a study experiences a 20% drop in cortisol, a stress hormone, after drinking four cups of tea daily for one month.

**Tea eases irritability, headaches, nervous tension and insomnia.** Red tea, also known as rooibos, is an herbal tea that has been shown to have a relaxing effect, and helps reduce irritations and inflammations in the body.

**Tea can cause a temporary increase in short term memory.** All of us have had moments when we felt like we were 'not on top of our game'. The caffeine it contains may give you just the boost you need to improve your memory, at least for a few hours.

**Tea aids in digestion.** Tea has been used in China for thousands of years as an after-meal digestive aid due to the high levels of tannins it contains.

**Tea can reduce stomach cramps.** Properties of red tea cause it to act as an anti-spasmodic agent and allow it to aid in the relief of stomach cramps or even colic in infants.

**Tea can help bad breath.** Polyphenols in tea can help to keep bacteria that cause bad breath in check.

**Tea may help prevent diabetes and many other health concerns.** Evidence suggests that green tea may help lower the risk of getting Type 2 diabetes, though additional research is needed to confirm this association. Tea contains catechin and polysaccharides which have been demonstrated to have a noticeable effect on lowering blood sugar. Cholesterol levels, blood pressure, intestinal inflammation, acne, arthritis, flu, Parkinson's disease, food poisoning, iron damage and disorders, and nasal congestion are just a few more of the areas of our health that are positively affected by drinking tea.



## SO WHICH TEAS ARE THE BEST FOR WHAT?

**White tea** is highest in antioxidants, aids in cleansing or detoxifying the body, helps fight cancer, helps increase your metabolism and is the best tea for skin and complexion.

**Green tea** has the most of the EGCG complex, which is good for metabolism. Green tea also has polyphenols for cancer prevention and has been known to protect against or decrease the spread of bladder cancer, breast cancer, ovarian cancer, lung cancer, skin cancer and stomach cancer among others. Green tea antioxidants boost the immune system and helps regulate blood sugar, aids in detoxifying the body, and promotes healthy teeth, skin, and bones.

**Oolong tea** has been shown to lower the intake of fat content in the blood when it is drunk during or after a high-cholesterol meal. It also contains the most tannic acid, which is good for lowering cholesterol. Oolong tea is good for healthy skin as well and is a weight-loss tea, since it burns fat already built up in the body.

**Black tea** may assist in lowering cholesterol, which is good for the heart. Medical research suggests black tea helps to regulate blood sugar, lower blood pressure, and keep the blood vessels soft because of the caffeine. Other black tea health benefits are the promotion of healthy teeth, skin and bones.

**Herbal tea** is high in vitamin C and rich in antioxidants. The majority of herbal teas are also naturally caffeine free, but the actual health benefits differ from one tea to another. For example, herbal teas that contain chamomile may soothe your stomach and throat, and peppermint teas can aid digestion.

**Rooibos tea** is high in antioxidants and rich in vitamins and minerals. This decaffeinated tea may aid in relieving allergies, increases iron absorption, and it is great for hair, teeth, skin, and bones. Rooibos tea is good for those with a sensitive central nervous system.

**Mate tea** gives the most energy of any type of tea; It has 100% of the caffeine as a cup of coffee. Mate teas also help curb the appetite and contain 21 vitamins and minerals for the body.

The bottom line is that tea is a healthy beverage offering a myriad of health benefits to body, mind and spirit. Take time (3 to 5 minutes) to brew your tea to bring out the beneficial polyphenols and, of course, while it is brewing, breathe in the soothing aroma it produces. So enjoy a delicious, healthy cup of tea!

References: [www.ivillage.com](http://www.ivillage.com), [www.nursingdegree.net](http://www.nursingdegree.net), [www.teavana.com](http://www.teavana.com)



# Links to Check Out

[www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/vector/bed-bug-guide.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/vector/bed-bug-guide.pdf)

[www.techletter.com/Top%2010%20pests/bedbug.html](http://www.techletter.com/Top%2010%20pests/bedbug.html)

[www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef636.asp](http://www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef636.asp)

[www.nchh.org/Portals/0/Contents/Bed\\_Bug\\_Report\\_2-12-10.pdf](http://www.nchh.org/Portals/0/Contents/Bed_Bug_Report_2-12-10.pdf)

[www.nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/bed\\_bugs/files/bed\\_bug.pdf](http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/bed_bugs/files/bed_bug.pdf)

[www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12133597/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12133597/)

[www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)

[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

[www.sleep-deprivation.com](http://www.sleep-deprivation.com)

[www.ivillage.com](http://www.ivillage.com)

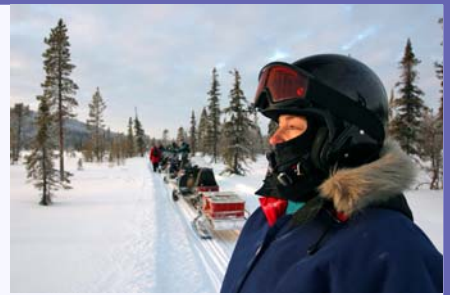
[www.nursingdegree.net](http://www.nursingdegree.net)

[www.teavana.com](http://www.teavana.com)

[www.sleep-deprivation.com](http://www.sleep-deprivation.com)

# How to Beat the Winter Blues with Exercise

In the midst of holiday meals and celebrations it can be hard to find the motivation, let alone the time to exercise. However, regular exercise is critically important to your overall well-being and health. Health professionals recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five times per week. It's easy to find reasons not to go outside to work out. Just because it's cold doesn't mean exercising ends!



**If you're going to be outside exercising, whether you're going for a walk, sledding with the kids, or shoveling snow, there are a few things you need to remember:**



**Wear a sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays and has an SPF of at least 15 or higher.** It is just as easy to get sunburned in the winter as in the summer. Remember to wear a lip balm that contains sunscreen and also wear protective sunglasses.

**Layer on clothing.** When you are outside and you're moving around, your body heat rises causing you to sweat. When you tire, your sweat dries causing your body to chill. Dressing in layers will allow you to remove clothing when you start to sweat and then put clothing back on as needed. Have the outermost layer be a waterproof, breathable material and try to have the layers go from thickest material on the outside to thinnest material closest to your body. If it is very cold or if you have asthma, you should also wear a face mask or a scarf over your mouth.

**Stay hydrated.** Even though it's cold outside and you may not feel thirsty, drinking and staying hydrated is essential. Thirst is one of the first signs of early dehydration. It's good to sip on water frequently.

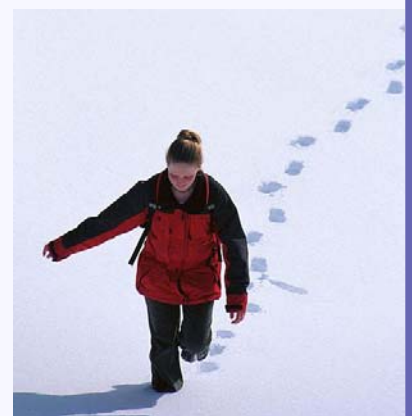
**Get warm before you head out.** If you're exercising in the morning and find it hard to leave your nice, warm house for the cold outdoors, put your workout clothes in the dryer for a few minutes to get them warm before you leave and, while they're heating up, take a quick, hot shower. It is a great way to get your body warm and get you a little more motivated to leave the house and get moving.

**Mix it up.** Adding a little variety to your work out will keep you motivated and keep you from getting bored. Instead of going on a walk every day at the same time at the same place, try some yoga or running up and down your stairs a few times. If you have a routine that you enjoy and that works for your body, try just mixing up the order of your work out. You could do cardio first one day, strength training first the next day, and so on. It will keep your body from getting "comfortable" to a workout routine, as well.

**Know the signs and symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite.** Frostbite is most commonly felt first in your face, fingers, and toes. Early warning signs include paleness, a burning/stinging sensation, loss of feeling, and/or numbness. If frostbite is suspected, get out of the cold immediately and slowly warm the affected area with rubbing. If the symptoms continue, seek emergency care. If you suspect hypothermia, shown by intense shivering, slurred speech, loss of coordination and fatigue, get emergency help right away. Warm your hands and feet every 20 to 30 minutes, and know when to head for home to prevent frostbite/hypothermia from occurring.

When it's cold outside, there's no need to hit the couch. You can be active, be healthy, and stay in shape no matter what the weather. With a little motivation, you can reap the benefits of staying physically fit year round, even when the weather outside is "frightful".

Resource: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)



# SNOW SHOVELING SAFETY SCOOPS!

Snow falls and it's followed by snowball fights...sledding... snow angels...snowmen...and **SHOVELING!!!**

## THE GOOD NEWS:

- Snow can be family fun time.
- Shoveling for 15 minutes counts as moderate physical exercise.

## THE BAD NEWS:

- Shoveling snow can cause a fatal heart attack due to sudden demand on an individual's heart.
- Cold air makes it harder to work and breathe which adds extra strain on the heart.

## WHO SHOULD THINK TWICE BEFORE SHOVELING:

- Anyone who has had a heart attack
- Individuals with a history of heart disease.
- Those with high blood pressure.
- Smokers

## A SNOW DRIFT OF SNOW SHOVELING TIPS:

- If you are inactive and have a history of heart trouble, talk with your doctor before you take on the task of shoveling.
- Avoid caffeine and nicotine before beginning. These are stimulants which may increase your heart rate and place extra stress on your heart.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Warm up your muscles before shoveling because warm muscles will work more efficiently.
- Pick the right shovel for you. A small blade will require you to lift less snow, putting less strain on your body.
- Begin shoveling slowly to avoid sudden demand on your heart.
- **Mostly importantly!! LISTEN to your body and STOP if you feel pain!!**



# WAGR SYNDROME-11P DELETION SYNDROME

WAGR Syndrome is a rare genetic condition recognized by the Office of Rare Diseases (ORD) of the National Institute of Health (NIH). This means that less than 200,000 citizens of the United States have the syndrome. The first letter of the physical and mental problems associated with the condition comprise the term "WAGR." These problems are:

- **Wilms' Tumor**, the most common form of kidney cancer in children.
- **Aniridia**, some or complete absence of the colored part of the eye, called the iris. This condition may be present in one or both eyes.
- **Genitourinary problems**, such as testicles that are not descended or hypospadias (abnormal location of the opening for urination) in boys, or genital or urinary problems inside the body in girls.
- **Mental Retardation**.

There are a total of 102 signs and symptoms identified in various sources for WAGR Syndrome.

Other names are used to describe WAGR Syndrome. They include:

- WAGR Complex
- Wilms' Tumor-Aniridia-Genitourinary Anomalies-Mental Retardation Syndrome
- Wilms' Tumor-Aniridia-Gonadoblastoma-Mental Retardation Syndrome
- Chromosome 11p deletion syndrome
- 11p deletion syndrome

The deletion of a group of genes, located on chromosome number 11 (11p13-the "p13" refers to the specific place on chromosome 11 that is affected), causes WAGR Syndrome.

WAGR Syndrome is a genetic syndrome and its symptoms are usually recognized after the baby is born. A prenatal ultrasound may reveal enlargement of the kidneys. There are no specific complications associated with the mother's pregnancy or the baby's birth. Aniridia is noticeable in newborns and problems with the genitals and urinary systems of infant boys is usually obvious. When these symptoms are recognized, genetic testing for the 11p13 deletion is performed. Babies born with WAGR Syndrome run a higher risk for developing other problems in infancy, childhood and adulthood.

Wilms' Tumor is a type of kidney cancer that occurs in nearly half of those who have WAGR Syndrome. Early symptoms are not easily detected. The presence of blood in the urine, low-grade fever, loss of appetite, weight loss, lack of energy, or swelling of the abdomen may be the first symptoms to be recognized. Aniridia is a condition in which the irises of the eyes fail to develop normally before birth. Partial or complete absence of the round colored part of the eye (iris) results. Aniridia is almost always present in babies diagnosed with WAGR Syndrome. Other eye problems often exist or develop as the child grows older.

A range of genital and urinary (GU) problems may be present in babies born with WAGR Syndrome. Boys may have undescended testicles or a urinary tract opening along the shaft of the penis rather than at its top. Girls may have underdeveloped ovaries, malformations of the uterus, fallopian tubes or vagina. Sexual assignment (male or female) at birth may be uncertain due to the problems of genital development. Persons with WAGR Syndrome are at higher risk to develop gonadoblastoma, a cancer of the cells that form the testes in males and ovaries in females.

Intellectual Disability/Mental Retardation and developmental delays are common among those with WAGR Syndrome. The range of intellectual disability ranges from mild to profound, and others may function with normal intellectual ability.

WAGR Syndrome is treated by addressing the specific symptoms of each person. Monitoring is an important means of recognizing and addressing problems in their early stages. In addition to the many medical symptoms associated with WAGR Syndrome, behavioral problems may also exist. When assessing behaviors, the first step is to rule out any contributing medical conditions. Obtaining an accurate diagnosis is critical and is best determined through a multidisciplinary team approach. A Functional Behavior Assessment is a valuable tool which will assist in identifying what maintains or motivates behavior. An accurate diagnosis will direct the search for appropriate services/treatment.



## TAKE-A-BREAK SNACK MIX

Energy bars can be smart sports snacks, but some brands can be like expensive chocolate bars stuffed with ingredients you can't pronounce. This easy no-bake energy bar tastes great and is a healthy snack, too.

### Ingredients

Cooking spray	1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 cup sliced almonds	2 cups whole-grain oat cereal with yogurt-flavored coating
1 tablespoon light brown sugar	2 cups whole-grain wheat and bran flakes with raisins
2 teaspoons water	1/2 cup dried unsweetened cranberries
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon	1/2 cup dried unsweetened blueberries

### Cooking Instructions

Put a piece of aluminum foil about 12 inches square on a platter or baking sheet. Lightly spray with cooking spray. Set aside.

In a small nonstick skillet, dry-roast the almonds over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes, or until lightly golden brown, stirring occasionally.

Stir in the brown sugar, water, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, or until the liquid has evaporated and the almonds are coated with the mixture, stirring constantly. Transfer to the foil. Let cool completely, 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, stir together the remaining ingredients.

Add the cooled almonds to the cereal mixture, stirring to combine. Store in an airtight container for up to 7 days.

### Cook's Tip

Whether your schedule is go-go-go or hurry-up-and-wait, you'll be glad you packed these tasty tidbits for healthy snacking. For variety, substitute different nutrient-dense dried fruits, such as cherries, apricots, and plums, for the cranberries and blueberries. Cut them into 1/4 to 1/2 inch pieces before adding them to the cereal mixture.

Serves 10 1/2 cup servings

### Nutritional Analysis Per serving

Calories Per Serving	139	Cholesterol	0 mg
Total Fat	2.0 g	Sodium	124 mg
Saturated Fat	0.5 g	Carbohydrates	28 g
Trans Fat	0.0 g	Fiber	4 g
Polyunsaturated Fat	0.5 g	Sugar	15 g
Monounsaturated Fat	1.0 g	Protein	2 g
Dietary Exchanges: 1 fruit, 1 starch			

# EATING DISORDERS

Eating disorders are defined as a severe disturbance in eating behavior. The cause of these conditions has been difficult to define. Psychological and emotional issues may contribute to the development of an eating disorder. There may be a genetic link, as those with parents or siblings with an eating disorder may be more at risk of developing one of these conditions. The fact that our society often tends to promote thinness may be a predisposing factor.



**Anorexia Nervosa** is exhibited by emaciation, a relentless desire to be thin, and an unwillingness to maintain a healthy weight. These individuals perceive themselves as being overweight. They may lose weight by excessive exercising and diet control, forced vomiting, or improper use of laxatives, diuretics, or enemas.

Some symptoms of anorexia nervosa include amenorrhea in girls and women, osteopenia or osteoporosis, severe constipation, brittle hair and nails, dry skin, muscle weakness, and lethargy.

Treatment includes restoring to a healthy weight, treating related psychological issues and eliminating behaviors or thoughts that lead to the problem, and preventing relapse. Psychotherapy appears to be the most effective treatment and although antidepressants have been used, their effectiveness has not been substantiated.

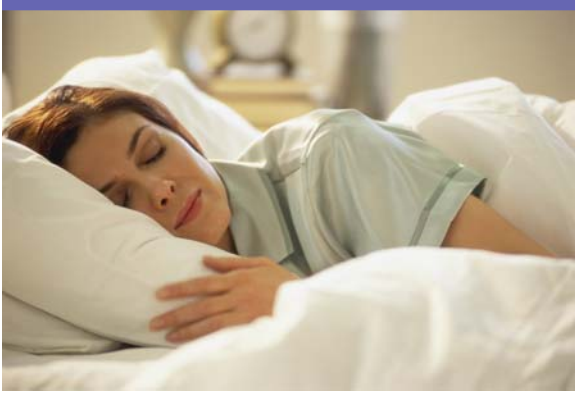
**Bulimia Nervosa** is recurrent eating of large amounts of food, followed by purging, excessive exercise, or fasting. These individuals may have a normal body weight but are unhappy with their size and shape. They want to lose weight and fear gaining weight. The bulimic behavior is often done in private due to shame or feelings of disgust. Symptoms may include electrolyte imbalance, gastrointestinal issues, such as GERD, and dental concerns. Individuals may have chronically inflamed and sore throats, swollen glands, kidney problems from misuse of diuretics, and severe dehydration.

Treatment of bulimia will involve several options, depending on the needs of the individual. These include cognitive behavioral therapy and nutritional counseling. Prozac is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat bulimia. It appears to reduce bingeing and purging, lessens the chance of relapse, and improves attitudes towards eating. (Note that many of our individuals on Prozac have gained large amounts of weight).

In **Binge-Eating Disorder** the individual will have repeated episodes of bingeing, feeling a lack of control over their eating. Unlike bulimia, the person will not purge, thus these individuals are often overweight or obese. Anxiety, depression, and personality disorders may co-exist, as well as cardiac issues and hypertension due to the excessive weight. Treatment is similar to bulimia. Appetite suppressants may also be prescribed.



Eating disorders are more common in women, however, men and boys can be affected. Binge-Eating cases occur equally and one in four preadolescent cases of anorexia occurs in boys. Although extremely serious, and at times life-threatening, the good news is that eating disorders can be treated. Studies are underway to determine causes of eating disorders and to seek to identify risk factors if someone suffers a weight loss.



## GETTING A GOOD NIGHT'S REST

Not sleeping enough, or not sleeping well, is not OK. Reducing one's nighttime sleep by as little as one and a half hours for just one night could result in a reduction of daytime alertness by as much as 32%. If a lack of sleep persists or there is a sleep disorder, it can cause serious problems, including impaired judgment, memory, and information processing, slower reflexes, irritability and mood swings. Clinically, disorders such as sleep apnea may be associated with **high blood pressure**

and the **risk of [stroke](#) and [heart attack](#)**. Insomnia and narcolepsy are two other types of sleep disorders.

### Sleep Study Needed

Treating a sleep disorder begins by asking the individual about sleep habits. House mates, spouses or caregivers may also provide information about the individual's **sleep history**. Typically, an individual reports to a sleep lab in the evening just before bedtime. Before retiring, electrodes are attached to his/her body to record their brain waves, eye movements and heart rate. Other monitors record airflow from the nose and mouth and breathing, while blood oxygen levels are measured via a finger clip. All of these measurements are non-invasive. A technologist reviews the information relayed from the devices and observes the individual, who is being video-taped, while sleeping. The next morning, the individual leaves the center, and the data is sent to a sleep specialist, who analyzes the findings. The specialist then prepares a report, which can take about a week to 10 days. The doctor who ordered the sleep study receives the report and shares it with the individual. Often a C-PAP or Continuous Positive Airway Pressure machine is prescribed and fitted for those who have obstructive sleep apnea and stop breathing during their sleep.



### Symptoms of sleep apnea:

Obstructive sleep apnea occurs when the throat muscles intermittently relax on inhalation and block the airway during sleep. Breathing momentarily stops. The brain signals the person to wake up and breathing restarts. The person is unaware that this may happen hundreds of times during the night. It interferes with the normal rhythm of sleep, including REM sleep. The most noticeable sign of obstructive sleep apnea is snoring, although not everyone who has obstructive sleep apnea snores. Other symptoms include daytime sleepiness, morning headache, awakening with a dry mouth or sore throat, and abrupt awakenings with shortness of breath. Risk factors for obstructive sleep apnea include excess weight, a neck circumference over 17 inches, hypertension, a narrowed airway or enlarged tonsils and adenoids. Men are twice as likely as women to have sleep apnea and those over 65 are two to three times more likely to have the condition.

### Some risk factors for sleep apnea include:

- A family history of sleep apnea
- Smoking — this may increase inflammation and fluid retention in the upper airway
- Use of alcohol or sedatives — these relax the throat muscles
- Prolonged daytime sitting can cause fluid to shift when reclining at night, narrowing airway passages.

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**Sleep apnea can lead to complications that range from minor irritations to seriously life-threatening ailments. These include:**

- Diabetes
- Dry mouth
- Fatigue
- Forgetfulness
- Headaches
- Heart failure
- Hypertension
- Lack of ability to concentrate
- Leg swelling
- Lowered libido
- Nocturia (frequent nighttime urination)
- Personality changes
- Strokes
- Weight gain, which can occur rapidly.

**Medical conditions can also contribute to sleep problems. Some of these conditions include:**

- Pain
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Asthma
- Arthritis
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease
- Mood disorders
- Restless leg syndrome
- Dementia
- Parkinson's disease

These conditions should be addressed by a physician to allow a comfortable night's rest.

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## **OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF A SLEEP DEPRIVATION**

**Poor Quality of Life:** You might, for example, be unable to participate in certain activities that require sustained attention, like going to the movies, seeing your child in a school play, or watching a favorite TV show.

**Occupational Injury:** Excessive sleepiness also contributes to a greater than two-fold higher risk of sustaining an occupational injury.

**Automobile Injury:** The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates conservatively that each year drowsy driving is responsible for at least 100,000 automobile crashes, 71,000 injuries, and 1,550 fatalities.

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## IDEAS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?

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