

# Sleep Disorders and Health

## The Dangers of Untreated Sleep Disorders

### Too Many of Us Aren't Getting Healthy Sleep

Almost 80 million Americans suffer from clinically significant sleep disorders. Nearly 90% go undiagnosed and untreated. Many think their sleep is fine when it is, in fact, poor.

Poor sleep affects mental and physical health. In fact, conditions related to sleep disorders can reduce your life span by up to 10 years!

Many people with sleep disorders are either unaware or think that they've just got to live with it. This is not true. You can get a good night's sleep (defined as 7 hours or more per night) and all the benefits that go with it—energy, focus, improved mood and health—when sleep disorders are diagnosed and treated. This all leads to better overall health and a better life.

### Impact of Poor Sleep on Overall Health

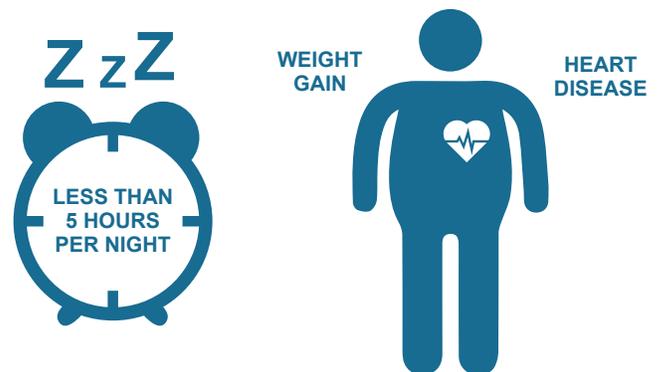
Persistent sleep loss (less than 5 hours of sleep per night) causes changes in your body's hormone levels which increases hunger and cravings for junk food. This can lead to a vicious cycle of poor sleep, weight gain, and heart disease.

Sleep disorders are often complicated by one or more disease that exist simultaneously. This situation is called a comorbidity. Comorbid diseases often make each disease worse.

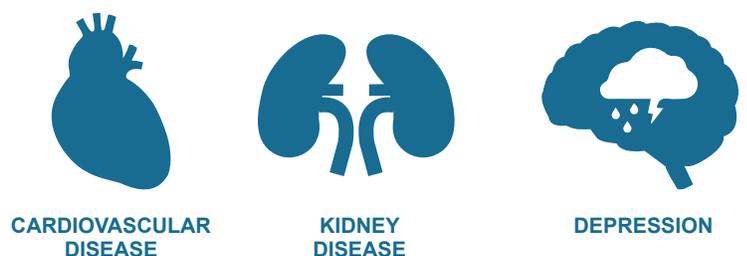
Sleep disorders may cause or worsen conditions like cardiovascular diseases, kidney disease, obesity, cancer, depression, anxiety and more. Alternately, healthy sleep can directly resolve other medical problems or assist in their treatment.



### PERSISTENT SLEEP LOSS CAN LEAD TO:



### SLEEP DISORDERS MAY CAUSE OR WORSEN:



## The Risks of Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is a common but serious sleep disorder. Over 30 million people are affected by Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). It's a chronic disease and serious sleep disorder that severely impacts mental and physical health, and sexual performance.

Sleep apnea is the repeated cessation of breathing during sleep. The blood-oxygen levels then drop and the individual wakes up slightly and starts breathing again, but with no memory of the event. It is like being strangled up to hundreds of times throughout the night and not knowing it. This increases the heart rate and blood pressure and requires the heart to work harder. These drastic changes in oxygen levels and other body chemistry changes can cause slow and persistent damage to the heart, cardiovascular system, and other vital organs.

Some common symptoms of sleep apnea are snoring, pauses in breathing, and choking or gasping for breath. Severe sleep apnea leads to an increased risk of hypertension, stroke, sudden cardiac arrest, diabetes, behavioral health and premature death! Risk factors that cause sleep apnea include excessive weight gain/obesity, narrow airway passages, and low muscle tone.

Several effective treatments for sleep apnea are available, including CPAP therapy (which provides airflow through a mask worn at night) and oral appliance therapy. Your sleep healthcare provider can help determine the best treatment for you. Effective treatment of sleep apnea will improve the quality of your sleep, your health and your life.

## Seeking Treatment and Improved Health

It is important to treat any problems that keep you from getting a good night's sleep. Solutions for your sleep problems are available by seeing a Sleep Medicine healthcare provider. Sleep medicine providers, like a sleep specialist physician or advanced nurse practitioner, can help identify the cause of your sleep disorder, make a full diagnosis of your sleep issue, and provide effective treatment.

Know the common symptoms and warning signs that you should discuss with your sleep specialist; including snoring, pauses in breathing during sleep, choking and gasping for air, daytime fatigue, insomnia, grogginess, morning headaches, and irritability.

## Diagnosing Your Specific Sleep Problem

Here's what to expect when visiting your sleep specialist for the first time. The specialist will want to know your sleep health history including: prevalence of snoring, your sleep habits, your work and lifestyle, your daytime alertness, and other medical conditions.

A full medical examination will be performed, checking everything from your weight, blood pressure, and heart rate, to your mouth, throat, tongue, nose, and neck size.

The sleep health provider may prescribe a sleep study at a sleep lab or a home sleep test. These tests collect data while you sleep and are essential for the sleep specialist to diagnose your sleep disorder and develop an effective treatment.

## Take action and take your life back

If you screened positive on the sleep questionnaire then you are likely to have a clinically significant sleep disorder.

Call and schedule an appointment with a sleep specialist right away to get a diagnosis and personalized treatment plan.

