

SLEEP

News and Views

Information about sleep, sleep disorders and how to get a better night's sleep.

A MedBridge Healthcare Publication

MAY is Better Sleep Month

Better Sleep Month aims to raise awareness about the benefits of better sleep and how poor sleep can disrupt our lives.

As with diet and exercise, sleep is crucial to physical emotional and mental health



Women's Health & Sleep

According to the National Sleep Foundation, nearly 40 million American men and women suffer from sleep disorders however sleep problems affect more women than men.

Women are more likely than men to take longer to fall asleep, tend to be more sleep deprived, are at an increased risk for insomnia, and often report different sleep disorder symptoms than men.

Insomnia: Insomnia is the most common sleep problem reported by women. Sometimes women begin to have sleepless nights associated with menstruation, pregnancy, or menopause and find it difficult to break poor sleep habits. If insomnia persists after incorporating lifestyle, behavioral, and dietary changes, consider cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT-I). Also consider other underlying & treatable causes such as depression, stress, anxiety, reflux, bladder problems or pain.

Narcolepsy: Women with narcolepsy have sudden "sleep attacks" (an over-whelming urge to sleep), suddenly lose muscle tone or

strength (cataplexy) triggered by emotion, and may have disturbed nighttime sleep. Narcolepsy affects approximately one in 2000 people and is treated with stimulants or antidepressants.

Pain and Sleep: Pain conditions like fibromyalgia, migraine or tension headaches, rheumatic, and arthritic conditions as well as heartburn are all more common among women. Pain may make it harder to fall asleep or lead to nighttime or early awakenings.

Sleep Apnea: An estimated 18 million Americans have sleep apnea including one in four women over age 65. While apnea is more common in men, it increases in women after age 50. Excess weight and hormonal changes during and after menopause are associated with an increased risk for developing this sleep disorder. <https://sleepfoundation.org/>

Therefore, celebrate Mother's Day and encourage thorough sleep evaluations focused on improving Women's Health.

Women with Obstructive Sleep Apnea may be less likely to snore very loudly & more likely to experience mood problems and headaches.

- Michael Breus, PhD, DABSM

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7 TIPS To Improve Sleep

Sleep Apnea May Boost Pregnancy Complications

Women with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) appear to be at greater risk for serious pregnancy complications, longer hospital stays, and even admission to the intensive care unit (ICU) than mothers without the condition. This is according to a study of more than 1.5 million pregnancies presented at the ATS 2017 International Conference.

The researchers analyzed the medical records of 1,577,636 pregnant women in the U.S. National Perinatal Information Center database from 2010 and 2014. Of those women, 0.12% had been formally diagnosed with OSA. Those with the diagnosis were typically older and more likely to be African American and smokers. They were also more likely to have pre-pregnancy hypertension, diabetes, and coronary artery disease. After adjusting for obesity, the researchers found that the risk of ICU admission was 174% higher in pregnant women with OSA compared to those without OSA and total hospital length of stay was significantly higher (5 days in

women with OSA compared to 3 days in women without OSA).

There was also an increased risk of rare but severe complications such as hysterectomy (126%), cardiomyopathy (259%), congestive heart failure (263%), and pulmonary edema (406%) associated with a diagnosis of OSA.

In addition, OSA in pregnancy resulted in an increased risk of pregnancy-related complications, including hypertensive disorders such as preeclampsia (122%) and eclampsia (195%), a severe form of preeclampsia that can lead to seizures. OSA also resulted in an increased risk of gestational diabetes (52%).

“Given that pregnancy is a ‘window’ into future cardiovascular and metabolic health, OSA is a diagnosis worthy of investigation in pregnancy,” said lead study author Ghada Bourjeily, MD, associate professor of medicine at Brown University, in a release.

“Early intervention in these women, as well as in their children, may represent a great opportunity to offer treatment strategies that may offer long-term health benefits.”

<http://www.sleepreviewmag.com/>

Sleep Apnea and Women

THE KEY DIFFERENCES:

Many women don't snore, especially those with Upper Airway Resistance Syndrome.

Women can experience :

insomnia, tiredness,
morning depression, and
headaches, anxiety
fatigue,

Women with sleep apnea also tend to have fewer apneic events per hour (lower AHI) than men, as well as more subtle and REM-related apneas. **This makes them harder to diagnose and be noticed by their bed partners.**

MISDIAGNOSES:

Due to the more subtle, nontraditional sleep apnea symptoms, women are often diagnosed in error with one of the following conditions, according to the National Sleep Foundation:

anemia, fibromyalgia,
cardiac or hypertension,
pulmonary illness, hypochondria,
depression, hypothyroidism,
diabetes, insomnia,
fatigue from menopausal
overwork, changes, or
obesity.

<https://www.wakeuptosleep.com/blog/2014/10/sleep-apnea-symptoms-in-women.html>

Stick to a sleep schedule: Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends, holidays, and days off. Being consistent reinforces the body's sleep-wake cycle and helps promote better sleep.

Pay attention to food and beverage choices: Don't go to bed either hungry or stuffed. Discomfort can affect the ability to fall asleep. Nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol affect the quality of sleep.

Create a bedtime ritual: Do the same things each night to tell the body it's time to wind down. Relaxing activities with the lights dimmed can promote better sleep by easing the transition between wakefulness and drowsiness. Avoid electronic devices, including TV, as research suggests it interferes with sleep.

Get comfortable: Create a room ideal for sleeping. This often means cool, dark, and quiet. Consider using room-darkening shades, earplugs, or a fan if needed. If sharing a bed, make sure there's enough room for two. Set limits on how often children or pets share the bed.

Limit daytime naps: Long daytime naps can interfere with nighttime sleep—especially if struggling with insomnia or poor sleep quality at night. Limit naps to 10-30 minutes during mid-afternoon. If working nights, make an exception to these rules and keep the sunlight out using room darkening shades to promote quality daytime sleep.

Include physical activity daily: Regular physical activity can promote better sleep, helping to promote falling asleep faster and enjoying deeper sleep.

Manage stress: When there is too much to do & too much to think about, sleep is likely to suffer. Consider getting organized, setting priorities, & delegating tasks. Take a break when needed, share a good laugh & before bed write down all thoughts and set them aside for tomorrow.