

# Depression and Sleep

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## Are Wintertime Blues Normal?

Not getting proper sleep can make it difficult to maintain a good mood. Poor sleep is an often overlooked contributor to depression in adolescents and adults. In fact, sleep apnea and depression share many of the same symptoms—excessive daytime sleepiness, fatigue, loss of energy, difficulty concentrating, and loss of libido can be attributed to either of these important health issues.

If someone has depression, does this mean they have a sleep disorder? If someone has sleep apnea, will they also be depressed? There is no set answer. However, it has been found that some patients with depression AND sleep apnea show improvements in overall mood when their sleep apnea is treated.

Throw in insomnia and restless leg syndrome and you have additional disorders that prevent healthy sleep. There are 84 known sleep disorders. The good news is that there are effective treatments for many of them.

People who have depression or think that they may be depressed should talk with their healthcare provider about whether poor sleep may be playing a role in their symptoms. Your hospital offers comprehensive sleep medicine services. If you are having trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or not waking up refreshed after 7 to 8 hours of sleep, you may benefit from a consultation with one of our Board Certified Sleep Physicians.

## A Message From Dr. Whitney By Dr Courtney Whitney, Board Certified Sleep Physician, Owner, Medical Director WSDC

When we review the medical literature on sleep and mental health we find that it is a double-edged sword. In other words, if our sleep suffers so does our mental health; and if we are suffering from depression or anxiety it can compromise our sleep. Consequently, when we are evaluating mental health it is imperative that sleep be discussed and, on occasion, analyzed by a sleep specialist.

Medications taken to manage depression and anxiety can also influence sleep. While some medications for depression and anxiety result in an increase in the quality and quantity of sleep, with other such medications we may see a decline in the amount of deep sleep and REM sleep. In fact, when you look closely at the side effect profile of these medications you will see a low incidence of insomnia and excessive sleepiness (hypersomnia). Consider discussing these issues with your doctor if you feel medications could be having a negative impact on your sleep quality.

It has been well published that when we sleep well we are happier. Being well rested tends to make us more energetic and less irritable. In my practice as a sleep specialist, my interventions have quite often resulted in a reduction of medications targeting depression. In addition, we often eliminate the need for or reduce sleep aids and medication for treatment of blood pressure, acid reflux, and headaches. Do you suffer from depression? Are you sleeping well?

## Do you Think You Might Have A Sleep Disorder?

Yes No

- Do you snore?
- Are you excessively tired during the day?
- Have you been told you stop breathing during sleep?
- Do you have a history of hypertension?
- Is your neck size > 17 inches (male) or > 16 inches (female)?
- Do you wake up to use the bathroom more than twice a night?
- Have you ever fallen asleep while driving?

**Answering “yes” to two (or more) of these questions may be a positive screen for Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Patient should consider talking with their healthcare provider about a referral for a sleep evaluation or sleep study at your local hospital.**

## We Can Help!

Discover real solutions to your sleep problems by talking with your Health Care Provider about a sleep study at

## Depression and Sleep

### Resolve to Sleep Better in 2015

Seems most of us use the start of a new year to act on things that we know we should do. Of all the worthwhile things we can do to improve ourselves, there is one that takes minimal time and effort, but can provide lifelong benefits for you and those around you—dealing with your sleep disorder. Ask anyone who has been diagnosed and treated for sleep apnea, and they will likely tell you that they wished they had done something about it sooner than they did. Some of you know that you would benefit from a sleep study, but others aren't sure. Take a minute to answer the seven questions of the other side of this newsletter. If you answer yes to two or more of the questions, make this the year that you talk with your healthcare provider about how you can improve your sleep. The comprehensive sleep medicine program available right at your hospital delivers the level of care you would find at a sleep center in a major metropolitan area—all close to home.

#### **CPAP Talk** By Susan Gunwall, LPN, WSDC Clinical Coordinator and Director of Operations

**If the Mask Fits,** you are far more likely to be successful with therapy. All too often we hear from patients who stopped using CPAP because they were not provided with a properly fitting mask. Work closely with your CPAP specialist to ensure you have a CPAP mask that suits your needs and fits you appropriately. Everyone has different needs and face shapes, so the right style and size mask for someone else may not work for you. If you don't know where to turn for CPAP supplies or advice, Whitney Sleep may be able to help.

**Many mask styles available.** A range of CPAP masks are available. For example, some feature full face masks that cover your mouth and nose, with straps that stretch across your forehead and cheeks. These may make some people feel claustrophobic, but they work well at providing a stable fit if you move around a lot in your sleep. Other masks feature nasal pillows that fit under your nose and straps that cover less of your face. These can feel less cumbersome. And they may work well if you wear glasses or read with the mask on, since some nasal pillow masks obstruct vision less than full face masks do.

**One size does NOT fit all.** Most masks come in different sizes. Just because you're a certain size in one mask doesn't mean you'll be the same size in another. CPAP masks are usually adjustable. Ask your CPAP supplier to show you how to adjust your mask to get the best fit. HOWEVER, if you happen to be in the wrong mask for your face / sleeping habits, no amount of adjustment will compensate for having the correct mask. As always, if you have questions, you can contact us at 877-844-6150.

## C P A P

Continuous  
Positive  
Airway  
Pressure

CPAP uses pressurized air to help keep a person's airway open during sleep. It is painless, adjustable, and measurable.

### Sleep Fact:

*A poorly fitting or worn out mask seal can be the difference between success and failure on CPAP therapy.*

#### **Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants**

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*We Can Help You With Your CPAP Supplies*

### About Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants

Founded in 2008, Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants (WSDC) was created to serve patients living in areas where access to comprehensive sleep medicine has not been available. WSDC is owned and operated by Dr Courtney Whitney, who is Board Certified in Sleep Medicine.

Instead of making patients drive to the next larger town, or settling for diagnostic-only sleep testing services, we partner with hospitals in smaller towns to provide the same level of sleep medicine care that would be found in a major metro market.

Hospitals that partner with WSDC, are able to offer a high quality, AASM accredited sleep medicine program to their patients right at their home town hospital. WSDC diagnoses and treats all 84 known sleep disorders. **If you are reading this in a waiting room or clinic lobby, your hospital partners with WSDC.**

Patients who feel they may have a sleep disorder are encouraged to talk to their healthcare provider about their symptoms. A simple one page screening form can often help determine the need for an overnight sleep study.