UHealth Sleep Center

Sleep Apnea

UHealth
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI HEALTH SYSTEM

Who is At Risk?

In the most common type of sleep apnea, obstructive sleep apnea, throat muscles fail to keep the airway open. While sleep apnea is most commonly found in overweight, middle-aged men, it can affect individuals of both sexes and children of all ages. Risk factors for sleep apnea include:

- Obesity
- Large neck circumference (17+ inches in men, 16+ inches in women)
- Over age 40
- Male
- Post-menopausal woman
- Smoking
- Family history of sleep apnea
- African-American, Pacific Islander, or Hispanic ethnic heritage

Surprisingly, athletes are just as much at risk for sleep apnea as non-athletes, due to their larger-than-average, muscular necks. The condition costs athletes the restorative sleep that is necessary for athletic performance and recovery from exhaustive exercise and injury.

Women Are Not Immune

Though men are more likely to have sleep apnea, it also affects women. Recent studies have shown that sleep apnea increases the risk for heart problems in women more than it does in men, making accurate diagnosis especially crucial for women. Warning signs include:

- Feeling tired even after a full night of sleep
- Loud and frequent snoring
- Making choking or snorting sounds during sleep
- Cessation of breathing during sleep
- Unexplained weight gain or difficulty losing weight
- Neck size of 16 inches or more
- Headaches upon awakening
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Falling asleep while driving or during daytime inactivity

About Sleep Apnea

Do you snore loudly or wake up gasping for air or choking? Are you often sleepy or have you fallen asleep while driving? Have you been told you snore?

If so, you may have obstructive sleep apnea.

More than 20 million Americans suffer from sleep apnea, in which breathing is briefly and repeatedly interrupted during sleep, reducing the amount of oxygen available to the brain and heart and severely disrupting rest.

Sleep apnea is associated with health conditions such as sudden death, heart disease, diabetes, stroke, hypertension, erectile dysfunction, and mood and memory problems. The poor rest associated with sleep apnea is also an urgent safety issue, as it can affect reaction time—a critical component of driving.

Due to the health and safety concerns posed by sleep apnea, the condition should be evaluated and treated by physicians with specialized expertise in sleep apnea and related sleep and health conditions.

You can find the region's most expert specialized care for sleep apnea at UHealth Sleep Center, part of the University of Miami.

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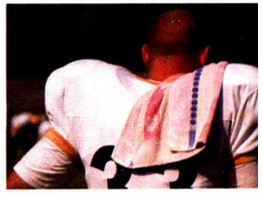

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Whether the sleep problem is anatomic, neurological, or psychological, the UHealth team's expertise helps ensure an accurate diagnosis.

A Close Connection with Diabetes and Weight

Obesity has reached epidemic levels in the U.S. and is the most common cause of sleep apnea. Sleep apnea is also associated with diabetes, affecting an estimated 70 percent of people with diabetes.

Recent clinical studies suggest that sleep apnea can in turn aggravate diabetes. This is because sleep deprivation can impair the body's ability to process glucose, leading to high blood glucose levels. Studies have also shown an association between sleep apnea and insulin resistance, a condition in which muscle, fat, and liver cells do not use insulin properly.

Sleep apnea can also lead to weight gain, in part because insufficient rest increases appetite and a preference for high-calorie foods. Proper diagnosis and a treatment plan can help people with sleep apnea not only reclaim the rest they need, but improve their health by helping to stabilize blood glucose levels and weight.

UHealth Sleep Center: A State-of-the-Art Resource

UHealth Sleep Center is fully accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine as the only comprehensive sleep center in South Florida. The board-certified sleep medicine physicians at UHealth Sleep Center specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of almost every type of sleep disorder affecting adults, children, and infants.

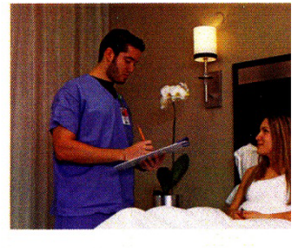
UHealth Sleep Center patients get the accurate evaluation they need—the first step in determining the right therapy—in a comfortable, boutique-hotel style environment, as seen above.

Whether the problem is anatomic (blockage of airflow), neurological (associated with conditions such as stroke, narcolepsy, restless legs), or psychological (such as insomnia due to depression), our sleep team's expertise helps to ensure an accurate diagnosis.

UHealth Sleep Center patients also have direct access to our highly respected UHealth specialists in other medical disciplines including ear, nose and throat, pulmonary medicine, neurology, psychiatry, and weight management.

Reclaim Your Rest, Restore Your Health

Unable to get the rest you need? Tired all the time? Take a free online quiz to find out if you may have sleep apnea at uhealthaware.org.



UHealth Sleep Center is located at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami's downtown Health District; UHealth at Kendall; and UHealth at Plantation.

To find out more about the UHealth Sleep Center and its team of board-certified sleep medicine specialists, or to make an appointment at any UHealth Sleep Center location, call 305-243-ZZZZ (9999) or email uhealthsleepcenter@med.miami.edu.