

# The Whitney Wire

The Quarterly Newsletter From Your Friends At Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants (WSDC)

June, 2010

## Improving Sleep

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### Summertime and the Sleeping is Easy?

If you have ever shared a tent, camper or cabin with someone who snores, you probably did not get a good night's sleep. There is a chance that the snorer is unaware of how loud he or she may be, and if that's the case, they would also not know if they stop breathing in their sleep throughout the night.

People who snore excessively and stop breathing while they sleep are not only difficult to sleep with; they could also have Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). Left untreated, OSA can increase a person's risk for High Blood Pressure, Stroke, Diabetes, Atrial Fibrillation, Diabetes as well as traffic and work related accidents.

Your hospital is able to diagnose and treat all sleep disorders. Take the sleep quiz at the bottom of this page--or share it with someone who may need help. Summer is too short, enjoy every bit of it!

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

As a Sleep Physician I am somewhat amazed at how often I hear of a patient who has gone through the time and expense of having a sleep study done and learning that they stop breathing when they sleep--only to find out they are not using CPAP because there was an issue acclimating to using it. If this sounds like you or someone you know--don't give up! There are things that can be done to help. If you've come this far, you could be just an adjustment or two away from being able to experience healthy, restorative sleep.

Wearing CPAP (the most reliable and effective treatment for Sleep Apnea) is not always easy. I have found that there are four important aspects to compliance.

- 1) It is essential the patient wearing CPAP know the alternative to not treating their Sleep Apnea is not breathing while sleeping. I feel strongly that each individual on CPAP should see their sleep study so they are fully aware of the breathing disturbances and associated disturbances in sleep that occur in the absence of CPAP therapy. All sleep studies done at this hospital include follow up that allows for viewing the study.
- 2) It is essential to have a comfortable mask. CPAP interfaces should fit properly and remain in place throughout the course of the night. For this reason, the CPAP Specialist will spend much time and energy exploring options specific to each patient's need.
- 3) It is imperative the CPAP pressure being delivered adequately eliminates all sleep disordered breathing. We know CPAP can be easy to wear while asleep, however, if arousals are present it may result in awakenings which subsequently may compromise sleep quality.
- 4) Co-existing sleep disorders may be a contributing factor in arousals and awakenings therefore should be addressed. An example of this would be a patient suffering from insomnia will have a difficult time with CPAP, thus a comprehensive sleep history and individual approach to each patient is essential.

If you struggle with CPAP, be sure to make an appointment with one of our CPAP Clinical Specialists using the information on the back of this newsletter. Remember, when CPAP therapy fails there are options.

### 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 Health Care Provider about a referral for a sleep evaluation.

### Sleep Fact:

*Untreated Sleep Apnea can increase the risk for high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, obesity and diabetes*

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### What is Normal?

The average person feels their sleep is “normal.” The guy who needs three cups of coffee in the morning in order to feel awake enough to face the day--thinks he’s normal. The lady who lies awake for hours only to sleep for three hours and not be able to get back to sleep--assumes it is normal for her age. People all over make excuses for their quality of sleep.

Normal sleep goes something like this: You go to bed and fall asleep within 20 minutes of your head hitting the pillow. You sleep for 7-8 hours (using the bathroom two or less times), and awake refreshed and ready to take on the day. You do not require a nap mid-day or early evening.

If you feel it’s time to stop making excuses for your sleep, see your Health Care Provider for and ask for a Sleep History form.

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

Many CPAP users report feeling much better after their very first night of CPAP therapy. Partners of CPAP users often report an immediate end to the snoring and thrashing that had been disturbing their own nightly sleep as well as their bedmates. With continued use, CPAP therapy enhances quality of life and reduces or eliminates Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) health risks.

Generally, the more severe the OSA, the more dramatic the improvement with CPAP therapy. People, who have less severe OSA, or a fainter awareness of their symptoms, may find that their improvement is less dramatic but still rewarding. Many CPAP users are delighted by the benefits of good sleep which include: improved energy and mood, renewed interests in work, hobbies and social activities. Many are able for the first time to succeed with their weight-loss, fitness, or quit smoking plans. Some are even able to reduce their dosages of blood pressure or heart medications after consulting their doctors.

In most cases, CPAP is needed for the rest of the user’s life to keep OSA under control. Unless the OSA is eliminated by lifestyle changes or other treatments, its symptoms and health risks will return if CPAP therapy is stopped. A repeat sleep study is needed to determine whether OSA has been eliminated by other measures.

## C P A P

Continuous  
Positive  
Airway  
Pressure

CPAP therapy is a painless, non-invasive way to treat Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)

### Sleep Fact:

*It is estimated that over 18 million American adults have Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Many are undiagnosed*

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### About Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants

Created by Dr. Courtney Whitney of the Whitney Sleep Center in Plymouth, MN, Whitney Sleep Diagnostics & Consultants (WSDC) serves the sleep medicine needs of Hospitals in less populated areas.

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

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

Partnering hospitals will soon provide quarterly CPAP clinics where CPAP users can bring their equipment to be inspected and obtain replacement CPAP accessories as needed. If you are in need of CPAP accessories, give us a call at 877-844-6150.