

CottageHouseCall

Galesburg Cottage Hospital • 695 N. Kellogg St. • Galesburg, IL 61401 • 309-343-8131

Issue 21 • Page 1



By: Marc Katchen, M.D.
Board Certified in
Sleep Medicine
and Neurology



Sleep Deprivation A Common Denominator in Many Chronic Diseases

Lack of sleep is a chronic problem among American adults and children. You know you haven't had a restorative night's sleep if you don't wake up refreshed ready to meet the day. Failure to get a good night's sleep not only detracts from your ability to work or learn at your best but is now shown to affect your health in many other ways. Recent research increasingly points to a lack of restorative sleep as a common denominator in several chronic health conditions that are growing more common in our society such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes and stroke.

The average American sleeps just six hours and 55 minutes at night – despite the industry recommendation of eight to 10 hours nightly for adults – according to the 2008 Sleep America poll, a national survey conducted annually by the National Sleep Foundation. One in ten adults sleeps less than six hours, according to a recent report by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.

Sleep is our body's way of repairing and recharging, and cutting this time short, short-changes our health. While we sleep, important hormones are secreted, blood pressure is lowered, kidney functions change and memory is consolidated, among other processes.

Metabolic syndrome – a term used to refer to several risk factors that all relate to obesity – is increasingly linked to lack of sleep. Several studies in recent years have drawn parallels between sleep deprivation and the development of conditions that increase your chances for heart disease, diabetes and stroke.

According to Harvard Medical School, the link between poor sleep and heart failure may be inflammation, the body's response to injury, infection, irritation, or disease. Poor sleep increases the levels of certain proteins and other substances that contribute to inflammation – and it affects the body's sympathetic nervous system, which is activated by fright or stress. A November 2008 study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine found that people with high blood pressure who get less than the recommended amount of sleep up their risk of heart disease and stroke. Study participants who slept less than 7.5 hours per night were more likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke, or die or cardiac arrest over a 4-year period. Individuals who were "short sleepers" did not experience the dip in blood pressure that typically occurs overnight. Researchers theorized that the lack of sleep leads to increased nervous system activity during the day, which can stress the cardiovascular system.

CottageHouseCall

Galesburg Cottage Hospital • 695 N. Kellogg St. • Galesburg, IL 61401 • 309-343-8131

Issue 21 • Page 2

Metabolic syndrome is diagnosed when a person has three or more of these conditions, simultaneously: belly fat, high triglyceride levels, high blood pressure, or high fasting blood sugar – an early warning sign of diabetes. A person can develop these conditions separately, but they tend to occur together.

About 47 million adults in the United States – nearly 25 percent – have metabolic syndrome, according to the American Heart Association, and these numbers continue to grow.

You know you are at risk if you are not refreshed from sleep in the morning. If you have to nap during the day or find yourself falling asleep at the wheel or at meetings, you have not had a good night's sleep.

Getting Your Zzzz's

The National Sleep Foundation recommends the following guidelines for selected age groups:

Infants: (0-2 months) 10.5-18 hours*, (2-12 months) 14-15 hours*

Toddlers/Children: (12-18 months) 13-15 hours*, (18 months-3 years) 12-14 hours*, (3-5 years) 11-13 hours*, (5-12 years) 9-11 hours

Adolescents: 8.5-9.5 hours

Adults: 7-9 hours

* including naps

Sources: National Sleep Foundation Web site, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's Sleep and Sleep Disorders Web site)

Take charge of your health today by turning to the resources at Galesburg Cottage Hospital by visiting our website at cottagehospital.com. For further information visit the National Sleep Foundation Web site at <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site>.

About the author: Dr. Marc Katchen is board certified in several areas of medicine; psychiatry sleep medicine and neurology. He is a member of the medical staff at Galesburg Cottage Hospital.

For more medical articles by local physicians visit our website, cottagehospital.com and click on any medical subject in bold, black print under the News and Events column.

We hope this issue of CottageHouseCall has been helpful to you. Please call again.