

Apnea and Sleep Deprivation

Like clockwork, you go to bed at 10pm and wake up at 6:00 in the morning. Still, you feel tired and sluggish during the day. Even with your strict bedtime routine, you could be getting robbed of valuable sleep. The culprit? Apnea.

If you suffer from chronic fatigue during the day, chances are good that you're experiencing sleep deprivation. The problem is that you can become so accustomed to this type of tiredness, that it's hard to realize how greatly it affects your daily lifestyle. In order to improve your quality of life, you need to learn how to manage your quota of sleep.

Sleep is like money; the longer you go without an adequate supply of it, the worse your situation gets. It's easy to run into "sleep debt" without even realizing it.

Sleep apnea is one of the worst offenders for causing sleep deprivation. Obstructive sleep apnea, or OSA, is the interruption of air into the lungs while a person is sleeping. This is generally caused by some kind of obstruction, and can cause serious medical consequences.

More often than not, OSA is a nuisance rather than a potential medical emergency. However, if the person suffering from OSA stops breathing for more than 10 seconds at a time, or if it happens more than ten times in an hour, this can be cause for concern. If you suffer from this type of apnea, you must seek advice from your doctor or health care provider.

Looking at how apnea and sleep deprivation affect the quota of sleep, it's easy to see why the person who is suffering from OSA feels lethargic or even ill during daytime hours. If your sleeping pattern is being disrupted to this degree, often many times in a single night, then you are not able to fall in to the deep, natural sleep state that is required to rejuvenate your mind and body.

A good night's sleep is absolutely necessary to keep fit and stay healthy, and OSA can cause serious disruptions in a healthy sleep pattern. If OSA causes you to stop breathing while you sleep, your brain will give you a nudge to quickly wake you up. You'll wake with a snort, and then fall back into sleep. This cycle will continue throughout the course of the night. If you exhibit this pattern, you could be suffering from apnea and sleep deprivation.

There is a reason that OSA only occurs while you sleep. In most cases, the problem is caused by a lack of muscle tone within the airway. When the body is relaxed in sleep, this weak muscle tone causes the airway to collapse, cutting off the airway and stopping the breathing. While awake, the muscle tone of the airways is sufficient to allow regular breathing. In severe cases, however, a person may experience labored breathing during the day as well.

It's easy to poke fun at someone who snores, or become annoyed and exasperated. But if you, or your partner, show signs of chronic snoring, it may actually be a case of apnea and sleep deprivation. Remember, this isn't an annoying habit; this is a serious medical condition that can have long term consequences. Speak to a doctor about treatment methods for sleep apnea and sleep deprivation.