January is Thyroid Awareness Month

An estimated 20 million Americans have some form of Thyroid Disease.

Up to 60% of those with Thyroid Disease are unaware of their condition

1 woman in 8 will develop a thyroid disorder during her lifetime.

\[\text{Source: American Thyroid Association}\]

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The Thyroid-Sleep Connection

By Kent Caylor RPSGT

We all get a poor night’s sleep occasionally, but for some, this can be a nightly occurrence. This may lead to fatigue and sleepiness, which can impact our performance during the day.

Fatigue can have several causes, including both emotional and physical causes. While there are a few practical things you can do to combat fatigue, like eating healthier foods, exercising, and reducing stress, for many, these things provide little relief.

If your fatigue is accompanied by feeling sluggish, weight gain, dry skin, and constipation, you might have a thyroid disorder. This is because your thyroid gland produces hormones that help regulate your metabolism.

Every cell in your body relies on your thyroid gland to distribute the necessary hormones so they can function properly. Too many of these hormones and your body goes into overdrive, too few, and you’re run down and sluggish.

According to the American Thyroid Association, more than 12% of the U.S. population will develop a thyroid condition in their lifetime. Women are 7 times more likely to have a thyroid condition than men. Additionally, as many as 60% of people with thyroid disease are unaware of any symptoms.

What Causes Your Thyroid to Misfire?

One major cause is an auto immune disease called Hashimoto’s thyroiditis, resulting in hypothyroidism.

Graves disease is another auto immune disease and results in hyperthyroidism. Other causes include certain medications, iodine deficiency, radiation therapy, thyroid surgery, and stress.

How Thyroid Disease Impacts Your Sleep

Thyroid disease can adversely affect your sleep. If you have hyperthyroidism, your body is in overdrive, preventing a restful sleep. If you have hypothyroidism, your body just can’t seem to get the rest it needs.

Hypothyroidism is also associated with obstructive sleep apnea. This relationship is poorly understood however there have been some cases where thyroid hormone replacement therapy has improved sleep apnea.

\[\text{Sources: Mayo Clinic, American Thyroid Association}\]
More than two-thirds of American adults are overweight or obese. These rates have been increasing for decades. The CDC indicates that the U.S. adult obesity rate has risen sharply in the past few years, despite a push to eat healthier. The age-adjusted adult obesity rate climbed to nearly 38 percent in 2013-2014, up from 35 percent in 2011-2012. The rate of extreme or “morbid” obesity is also rising. More than six percent of adults now have a BMI of at least 40. This represents an excess weight of roughly 100 pounds or more.

One of the major health risks linked with obesity is obstructive sleep apnea. Thin people can have sleep apnea, however, a major risk factor for OSA is excess body weight. Data suggest that the rate of OSA has increased greatly over the last two decades. The most likely cause is the rise in obesity.

An estimated 12 to 18 million adults in the U.S. have untreated OSA. More emphasis should be placed on not only addressing the sleep apnea, but treating obesity in this population and it is also important to find better ways to enhance adherences with CPAP therapy and weight loss interventions.

Therefore, encourage thorough sleep evaluations focused on identifying and treating sleep disorders in this patient population.

http://www.sleepeducation.com

PRIORITIZE YOUR HEALTH IN 2019

**GET MORE SLEEP** - What can help increase energy, improve mood, and even help with weight loss? Sleep! It’s a well kept secret to good health.

**CHANGE YOUR HEALTH OUTLOOK** - Instead of seeing it as all-or-nothing, look at health as a continuum. Move closer and closer to good health by making small, positive decisions.

**INTEGRATE EXERCISE** - For most, exercise is an add-on, something done if time permits. It’s much easier to incorporate exercise if it becomes a part of the daily routine.

**SAY GOODBYE TO FAD DIETS** - Losing weight is a staple resolution, which could explain why so many diets fail.

Instead of following the latest diet craze, focus on healthy eating.

**HEAD BACK TO THE KITCHEN** - This will allow more control over the nutritional quality of meals. Preparing food at home will save calories, money, and will be healthier.

**UNPLUG DAILY** - Thanks to modern electronics, we’re tuned in 24/7– and more stressed than ever. A growing body of research finds that media overload can increase the risk for depression, social anxiety, and job burn-out. Spend an hour, 10 hours, or a full day without electronics.

**MAKE THIS YOUR BEST YEAR YET!**

**How do I know if I have a Thyroid problem?**

Because many of the symptoms of thyroid disease are also symptoms of other conditions, it is best to consult your health care practitioner about a blood test specifically for thyroid disease.

**Is thyroid disease hereditary?**

Certain forms, such as Hashimoto’s thyroiditis, and Graves disease can be. Therefore, if you have a family history it would be a good idea to consult your health care practitioner, even if you have no symptoms.

**Can I function without my thyroid gland?**

Sometimes it’s necessary to surgically remove your thyroid. Many people will require prescription thyroid hormone replacement afterwards. This will be monitored on an on-going basis.

**I have sleep apnea, should I also have my thyroid checked?**

Some of the symptoms of sleep apnea, such as being tired all the time, depression, and weight gain are also symptoms of thyroid disease. Talk with your doctor about your thyroid; a simple blood test can show if it’s functioning properly.

Sources: Mayo Clinic, American Thyroid Association