



WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW BEFORE THEY HAVE SURGERY

For many people a major surgery can be one of the most significant experiences that they'll ever go through. These procedures can impact their lives for the better; however, there is one particular danger anyone about to go under the knife should know about.

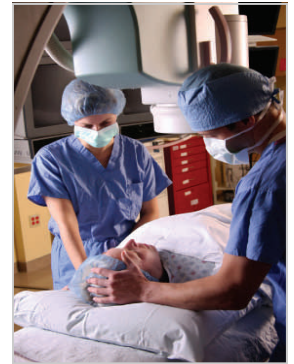
It is estimated that over 40 million inpatient procedures are performed every year in the United States. (NCHS) Most of these surgeries involve the use of some sort of anesthesia to lessen the patient's pain. Methods of anesthesia vary from using local anesthetic to block small areas of pain to the patient being put into an unconscious state using gases or intravenous means. The latter methods are usually riskier and anesthesiologists train for years to administer them correctly. One complication they must prepare for is a collapse of the patient's airway while they are unconscious.

General anesthesia and analgesic pain medications can relax the muscles keeping the patient's airway open, leading to an obstruction of breathing. This is obviously a very dangerous situation during a surgery as the patient cannot wake up and regain airway patency. Anesthesiologists monitor the patient carefully during the procedure to make sure they remain breathing.

However, after the surgery many patients have an increased risk while in the recovery room as well. It is during this time that they are particularly vulnerable to Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). OSA occurs when the muscles in the throat relax during sleep. When these muscles relax, your airway narrows or closes and your breathing is momentarily interrupted. This may reduce the amount of oxygen supplied to your brain. Your brain senses that you've stopped breathing and briefly arouses you from sleep so that you can reopen your airway. Unfortunately, the anesthesia and pain medications used during and after surgeries can worsen the effects of sleep apnea and blunt the body's natural coping mechanisms. This increases the risk of breathing complications after a surgical procedure.

Approximately 25% of the adult population is estimated to have some degree of Sleep Apnea, and 80-90% are undiagnosed with this condition. It is very important to be screened for this condition before having surgery. In fact, because of the prevalence of OSA in the adult overweight population, obesity centers recommend or require that patients seeking gastric bypass or banding procedures undergo a full sleep evaluation before their surgery. Unfortunately, many hospitals and operating centers still do not screen for OSA and doctors need to be made aware of your condition so they may take necessary precautions.

If you already know you have Sleep Apnea and are being treated for it, be sure to let your anesthesiologist know about the condition prior to the day of your surgery. It is also good practice to request to meet the anesthesiologist beforehand regardless if you think you may have sleep apnea or not. If you have a CPAP machine for treatment of OSA, bring it to the hospital with you and be sure to inform the nurse taking care of you. You may need to be monitored for a longer period after surgery than someone who doesn't have OSA. They should be aware you need the CPAP during recovery and should be well versed in proper use of the machine. For more information or to be screened for OSA, contact Oregon Sleep Associates.



Having Sleep Apnea can greatly impact patients' surgeries and recoveries.

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THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- **Patients recovering from surgery who have OSA should be monitored closely by family members once they return home**
- **Common pain medications such as hydrocodone and oxycodone can suppress respiratory effort and worsen Sleep Apnea**

SHIFT WORK: TIPS FOR THE NIGHT SHIFT

For many of us, the work week lasts from Monday through Friday, 9AM to 5PM. We punch our time cards and head home for dinner, relaxation, and sleep. But for some, the day is just beginning. Shift work refers to the employment practice of utilizing round the clock shifts to maximize output. This practice has increased over the last century as more industries requiring such hours expand. It is estimated that 30% of workers in some industries such as healthcare, manufacturing, civil services, and hospitality have schedules other than the day shift (BLS 2004) But what effect does this have on a person's health and wellbeing?

Researchers have found that working the night shift adds many complications to maintaining health. Food available late at night is often designed for convenience rather than health, exercise options are usually limited, and many shift work jobs are sedentary. Perhaps most importantly, sleep is compromised in both total sleep time and through disruptions to its quality. Prolonged lack of sleep caused by night work is referred to as "Shift Workers Sleep Disorder". The body's circadian rhythm, the regulatory system of wake and sleep, is thrown off by shift work and exposure to light at the wrong times. Sleeping during the day is often very difficult because of outside distractions such as sound, light, and daytime responsibilities. The consequences can be serious; a study released in December 2007 stated that shift work may be tied to causing cancer. (IARC, vol 98) Lack of sufficient sleep can hinder the body's ability to fight cancer and repair damaged cells.

Unfortunately, many shift workers have no alternative but to work this schedule. However, there are some things they can do to lessen the detrimental effects of shift work on their bodies and spirit:

- *If possible, try to work fewer shifts in a row. It's better to work a few longer shifts with more days off to recover.*
- *If your lifestyle permits it, maintain the night schedule on your days off too.*
- *Eat healthier foods at night by packing a lunch rather than relying on fast food.*
- *Keep active and try to exercise during the night; music can help liven a monotonous routine.*
- *If your job permits it, take short naps during your breaks.*
- *Maintain a healthy sleep environment: cover windows or use a sleep mask to block light, wear ear-plugs and turn off phone ringers to keep things quiet.*
- *Avoid using excess caffeine or other stimulants; these may give an initial rush but tend to wear off quickly and disrupt sleep when it's needed.*

People working the night shifts may also want to be tested for an underlying sleep disorder such as sleep apnea. These disorders may be preventing the workers from getting a restful sleep during their sleep period.

LATEST 'SLEEP IN AMERICA' POLL RESULTS

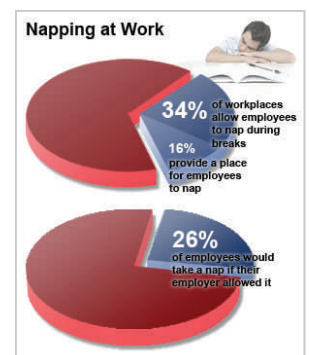
Every year the National Sleep Foundation polls thousands of people to find out more about their sleep habits. The results for 2008 are in. According to NSF's 2008 *Sleep in America* Poll, long work days that often extend late into the night are causing Americans to doze on the job, at the wheel, and on their spouses. Among the poll respondents, 29% fell asleep or became very sleepy at work in the past month and 20% have lost interest in sex because they are too sleepy. Sleepiness also affects people's performance behind the wheel; an astounding 36 percent of drivers say they have nodded off or fallen asleep while driving in the past year. "With Americans working such long hours – on top of their other responsibilities like childcare and household maintenance – *something* has to give. Unfortunately, that something is usually nighttime sleep," says Darrel Droblich, NSF acting CEO. Other figures illuminated by the poll; 32% only get a good night's sleep a few times per month, 65% experience insomnia 44% of which have it every night, and 33% say they snore at least a few nights a week. (NSF) To find out more statistics from the 2008 *Sleep in America* Poll and see how you compare to other sleepers, visit www.sleepfoundation.org.



Odd shifts can lead to fatigue and other health problems.

"An astounding 36% of drivers say they have nodded off or fallen asleep while driving in the past year."

-NSF 2008 Sleep in America Poll



The National Sleep Foundation conducts a national poll every year to study sleep trends.

CAFFEINE: A WORLDWIDE ADDICTION

Since Starbucks Coffee® opened its first location in 1971, the company has ballooned to have more than 15,000 stores in 44 countries. (*starbucks.com*) In recent years sales of energy drinks such as Rockstar® and Redbull® have reached well over 3.5 billion dollars annually. While slick advertising and aggressive business tactics can help explain the successes of these products, there is one underlying reason for it all: caffeine addiction.

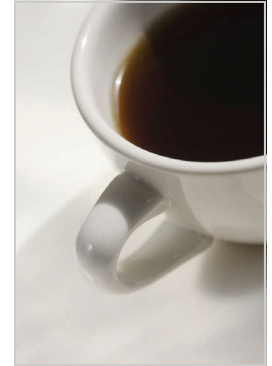
Caffeine has been called the most popular drug in the world and is used by over 80% of the population. It is found naturally in over 60 plants including the coffee bean, tea leaf, and cacao pod. All over the world people consume caffeine on a daily basis in coffee, tea, chocolate, soft drinks, and some drugs. Because caffeine is a stimulant, most people use it after waking up in the morning or to remain alert during the day. While it is important to note that caffeine cannot replace sleep, it can temporarily make us feel more alert by blocking sleep-inducing chemicals in the brain and increasing adrenaline production. Once in the body, caffeine will persist for several hours: it takes about 6 hours for one half of the caffeine to be eliminated. (*NSF*) Though there are numerous studies to support the idea that caffeine causes physical dependence, traditionally it has been thought of as having fairly benign health effects. However, in recent years more evidence has surfaced on the damaging prospects of caffeine use. In one 2007 study by Kaiser Permanente, researchers reported that the risk of miscarriage by pregnant women doubles with just moderate caffeine use. They advised that pregnant women reduce or eliminate their caffeine intake. Also the substance has been found to increase blood sugar levels in people with type II Diabetes, making it harder to control that disease. (*NSF Alert, Jan 2008*) Doctors recommend limiting caffeine use to less than 200 mg per day, or about the equivalent of 3 cups of coffee. Try not to consume any caffeinated items within 8 hours of your bedtime. For more information on caffeine and how it affects sleep, check out www.sleepfoundation.org

INSOMNIA: ARE SLEEPING PILLS RIGHT FOR YOU?

In 2006, sales of the sleep aid Ambien® topped almost two billion dollars and placed that medication at number 13 on the list of the top 200 drugs prescribed in the US (*drugs.com*) The popularity of Ambien® and other sleeping aids suggests a growing trend of addressing sleep problems with medications. Unfortunately, with so many competing drugs and opinions based upon advertising, it is hard for a patient to distinguish what sort of treatment they need.

If you are having trouble sleeping, the first thing a doctor should do is determine what type of Insomnia you are experiencing. Insomnia can be *"Transient"*, occurring infrequently and in relation to temporary difficult or stressful times, or *"Chronic"*, occurring on a regular basis. The symptoms of insomnia can also arise as *"Sleep-onset Insomnia"* or they can manifest themselves after the patient has fallen asleep as *"Sleep Maintenance Insomnia"*. Depending on what type of Insomnia you have, sleeping pills might be an effective treatment. For example, a person has Transient Insomnia triggered by stress at work; they can't seem to shut off their mind and fall asleep. In this situation, a short term prescription of a sleep aid might help them. On the other hand, someone else has been waking up several times a night and has difficulty getting back to sleep. In their situation it would be prudent to be screened for an underlying sleep disorder such as Sleep Apnea. Their sleep may be disrupted by the disorder, resulting in Insomnia symptoms and sleeping pills would further mask the problem.

It's important to remember that sleeping pills should not be prescribed nor used lightly as they can have serious side effects and consequences. One recent study concluded that patients with sleep apnea who did not have their condition treated and were instead given sleeping aids had a substantially higher risk of car accidents. Also, some people may experience effects similar to sleep walking and may become a danger to themselves and others. Long term effects of sleeping aids have not been well documented and the FDA generally recommends short term use of most hypnotic medications. If you have more questions or concerns about these medications or sleep in general, contact Oregon Sleep Associates at 503-288-5201.



Over 80% of the world uses caffeine regularly.

"Sleeplessness is a desert without vegetation or inhabitants"

***-Jessamyn West,
Author***



With so many sleep aids marketed today, it's difficult to cut through all the hype.

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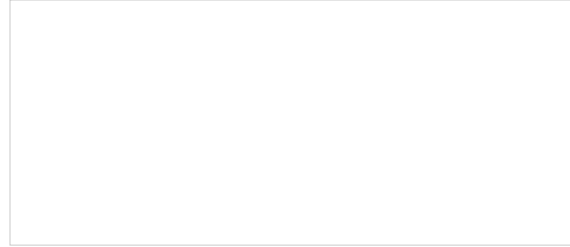
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B E T T E R S L E E P F O R B E T T E R H E A L T H . . .

SPOTLIGHT ON OREGON SLEEP ASSOCIATES: BEKA DONKER, RPSGT

Beka Donker joined Oregon Sleep Associates when it opened in 2005 as one of its first sleep technicians. Three years later she says she still enjoys her position, “it’s different, but interesting”, she adds, “it’s very rewarding knowing you are helping people get a better night’s sleep and making their lives better”. Beka says her schedule allows her more time off to see her kids, but she can “definitely relate with patients that feel tired all the time.” Patients often ask how she can stay up all night monitoring them. “It can be tough sometimes”, she says, “exercise and yoga help, plus you have to eat well. We take turns cooking, trying out new dishes on each other.” Patients have consistently remarked how comfortable Beka makes them feel when they come to the lab. Her friendly demeanor and wealth of knowledge about sleep lets them know they’re in good hands. Last year Beka became registered as a Polysomnographic Technologist, the highest credential one can achieve as a sleep technician.



*Oregon Sleep Associates
Sleep Technologist,
Beka Donker*