

It's sleepless nights for 1 in 20 Delhiites



Sleep disorder isn't merely lack of sleep but it is a serious medical disorder resulting from lack of sleep.

Doctors say that one in every third person in Delhi suffers from disturbed sleep. One in every twenty persons in Delhi could be suffering from sleep disorder and half of these people may not even know about it.

Something as common as insomnia, snoring and sleep apnea — the obstruction of the airway

during sleep, causing loud snoring and sudden awakenings when breathing stops — could be serious sleep disorders.

Lack of sleep could result in serious neurological, gastrointestinal, psychological, cardio vascular health problems. More than 50% of those who snore suffer from sleep apnea which leads to cessation of breathing for 10 seconds, at least five times per hour of sleep. Sleep apnea has been linked to hypertension, strokes, diabetes and irregular heartbeats.

The other sleep disorders are

- **Night terror** | abruptly waking up from sleep terrified and sweating, it's common in children
- **Parasomnias** | disturbed sleep/disruptive sleep related events
- **Rapid eye movement behaviour disorder** | Acting out dreams while in sleep
- **Restless legs syndrome** | urge to move the leg while sleeping
- **Sleepwalking** | walking doing other activities while in sleep

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Akaash Mehra, 29-year-old executive in a BPO, used to brush aside his frequent dosing off during the day, claiming he would catch up on his sleep later. However, he would wake up groggy even after going to bed early. His sleep grew more and more restless, until he decided to consult a doctor. Akaash was diagnosed with hypertension, obesity and sleep apnea.

"Most of us assume that we have full control over our sleep, not realising how much stress impacts our sleep. I took my sleep for granted for a very long time, packing in parties, movies and long drives during the hours I should have been sleeping," says Akaash.

Sleep apnea is the obstruction of upper airways while sleeping, which results in loud snoring and sudden awakenings when breathing stops for a few seconds. The pauses in breathing are known as apneas. Sleep apnea is fast emerging as a major health problem amongst Delhiites.

Sleep disorder isn't merely

lack of sleep but a serious medical disorder resulting from lack of sleep. Doctors say that one in every third person in Delhi suffers from disturbed sleep. However, it may not necessarily lead to sleep disorder. One in every 20 people in Delhi could be suffering from sleep disorder and half of these people may not even know about it.

"Obesity is a major reason. Those with heaviness around their neck and face are at risk. The disorder is more noticeable among children due to obesity," says Dr Garima Shukla, associate professor, AIIMS.

Doctors say that children in Delhi are increasingly falling prey to sleep disorders. With routines more packed now with extra-curricular activities, soap operas and computers along with their homework, children are going to bed much later than they used to. Disturbed sleep, loud snoring, restlessness, morning headaches, trouble concentrating, nocturia (getting up during the night to urinate) and feeling sleepy during the day could be just some of the symptoms of sleep apnea.

Sleep apnea not only leads to decreased sleep but also reduced oxygen supply as a result of the gaps in breathing. This can lead to serious health hazards like hypertension, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, stroke and diabetes.

"The first symptom of sleep disorder is excessive sleepiness during the day. The treatment for sleep apnea is a machine called continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP), which ensures continuous and unobstructed sleep during the night," says Dr Rajesh Chawla, senior consultant, department of respiratory medicine, Apollo Hospital.

Insomnia is the still the most common sleep disorder. The other sleep disorders are night terror — abruptly waking up from sleep terrified and sweating. Parasomnias with disturbed sleep is also seen in children. Rapid eye movement behaviour disorder (acting out dreams while in sleep), restless legs syndrome (the urge to move the leg while sleeping) and sleepwalking are some of the other sleep disorders.

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