

# Obese, frequent fliers more prone to sleep disorders

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EVERYONE ENVIED champion snorer Girdhari Yadav (45) his deep slumber.

At his wife's insistence, Yadav, however, went to the sleep laboratory in Delhi's Indraprastha Apollo Hospital. The businessman, who — at 92 kg — is 30 kg overweight, is worried now. He's been diagnosed with a sleep disorder, obstructive sleep apnea, which can shorten his life.

"Relatives would tell me how lucky I was to get deep sleep. But my wife occasionally slept in another room because of my snoring. I went to a doctor, who said I might die early because of it," said this resident of Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, who is a frequent traveller and has undergone treatment.

Sleep labs across India — dark, soundproof rooms in which doctors monitor sleep patterns as you snooze with electrodes on your scalp and other places — are getting more and more people with sleep disorders, who are obese, frequent fliers and work at call centres. Doctors attribute this to hectic work and unhealthy eating.

Nearly 75 per cent patients diagnosed with sleep disorders at Mumbai's P.D. Hinduja Hospital were obese or had cardio-vascular issues. At the Manipal Hospital, Bangalore, more than 80 per cent sleep patients are obese; most of them male.

## BEWARE OF



- Heavy snoring
- Choking during sleep
- Fitful sleep
- Waking up with a start often

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# Frequent fliers, obese more prone to sleep disorders

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"Our study indicated that obese men or those with collar size of over 17 inches, who snored or choked during sleep, were prone to sleep disorders," said Dr Zarir Ud-wadia, head of pulmonology department, Hinduja.

About 15 per cent of the 100-odd sleep disorder patients who come to Dr M.S. Kanwar, senior consultant, respiratory and sleep medicine at Delhi's Apollo Hospital, are frequent fliers.

"A lot of patients went abroad frequently, others work at call centres. Late nights, sleeping at odd hours, stress, competition make people vulnerable to insomnia," said Dr Kanwar.

Awareness of sleep disorders has increased. Dr Ud-wadia supervises three sleep studies daily; the hospital would get a patient a week five to six years ago.

Doctors said sleep disorders must be taken seriously. "If oxygen supply drops to 50-80 per cent, it can be fatal. A person with a sleep disorder can choke and die," said Dr Isaac Matthew, consultant pulmonologist at Manipal Hospital, Bangalore. "Sedentary lifestyles are the biggest trigger."

Ravi Shyam (55), director of the India chapter of a multinational media training company, said undergoing a sleep study was the best decision he took.

"My sleep was disturbed and I would feel drowsy during the day. After treatment, even others noticed how peppy I am," said the resident of Four Bungalows in Andheri area.