

# Healthcare Spotlight

## State Wellness Center and Pharmacy

Wellness Center (334) 263-8470 | Pharmacy (334) 263-8460

### *Is what you don't know keeping you up at night?*

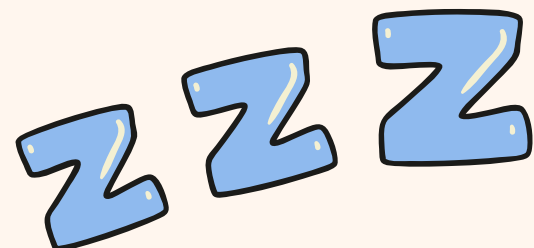
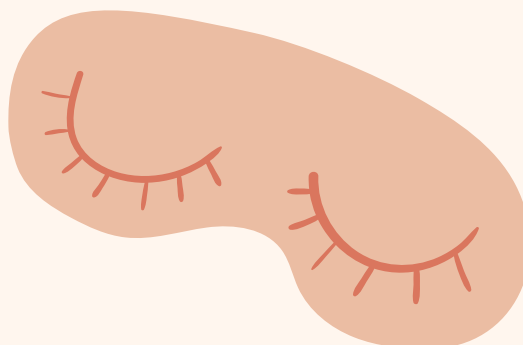
According to the National Sleep Foundation most adults need about 7 to 9 hours of restful sleep each night. Many of us do not get enough sleep. More than 50 million Americans have chronic sleep disorders. Getting restful sleep is **CRITICAL** to both our physical and mental health. For our August issue, we want to focus on 3 sleep disorders - insomnia, restless leg syndrome, and sleep apnea.

#### **Newsletter Highlights:**

Insomnia

Restless Leg Syndrome

Sleep Apnea



# Insomnia

Insomnia is when someone is having trouble falling asleep and staying asleep.

## Signs and Symptoms:

- Difficulty falling asleep at night
- Waking up during the night
- Waking up too early
- Not feeling well-rested
- Daytime tiredness or sleepiness
- Irritability, anxiety, or depression
- Difficulty paying attention
- Increased errors or accidents

## Factors Associated with Increased Risk:

- Female sex, over age of 60, mental health disorders, physical health conditions, stress, and irregular schedule

## Common Causes of Chronic Insomnia:

- Stress
- Travel or work schedule
- Poor sleep habits
- Eating too much late in the evening
- Medications (antidepressants, asthma medications, blood pressure medications)

## Medical Conditions Associated with Insomnia:

- Mental Health Disorders (anxiety, PTSD, depression)
- Chronic pain
- Asthma
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)
- Diabetes



## Treatment Options:

- Good sleep hygiene
- Stress management
- Over-the-counter medications, such as Melatonin, Benadryl, and Unisom are used for short-term insomnia which only lasts for days or weeks.
- CBD has been studied and does have potential health benefits for insomnia symptoms as well
- Other prescription medications are used for chronic insomnia, which can last for a month or more, or when the medications listed above do not work
- Contact your doctor if you are experiencing insomnia and the options listed above are not helping

## Prevention:

- Keep bedtime and wake time consistent
- Stay active
- Avoid or limit naps
- Avoid or limit caffeine, alcohol, and nicotine
- Avoid large meals before bedtime
- Create a relaxing bedtime ritual (warm bath, reading, or listening to soft music)

# Restless Leg Syndrome

Restless Leg Syndrome is the urge to move your legs in response to an uncomfortable or unpleasant sensation. It is usually worse in the evening and at night. For a diagnosis of Restless Leg Syndrome, you have to experience signs and symptoms three times a week for at least 3 months.

## Signs and Symptoms

- Creepy, crawly feeling in leg(s) at rest
- Leg Cramps and Aches
- Pulling Sensation
- Itching or Burning
- Feelings are deep in the leg typically below the knee
- Occurs in the first three hours of sleep
- Usually described by bed partner as forceful leg jerks



## Risk Factors

- Advanced Age
- Iron Deficiencies
- Parkinson's Disease
- Diabetes
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Pregnancy

## Common Causes

- Iron Deficiency Anemia
- Chronic Stress
- Insomnia
- Excessive Alcohol and Caffeine Intake
- Smoking

## Complications

- Insomnia
- Heart Attack or Stroke
- Depression
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- Overall Decreased Quality of Life

## Prevention

- Maintain good sleep hygiene
- Limit excessive consumption of alcohol or caffeine
- Exercise regularly
- Quit Smoking
- Avoid common sleep aids like Benadryl or Unisom

## Treatment

- Use pneumatic pressure therapy to increase blood flow to legs
- Get massages and take hot baths before bed to relax muscles
- Get a nighttime routine and a normal sleep schedule
- Cryotherapy - use of colder temperatures to lessen pain and/or spasming of muscles
- Consult doctor about iron levels for potential treatment

# Sleep Apnea

Sleep Apnea occurs when someone has trouble breathing while sleeping. This leads to periods of waking throughout the night to catch a breath. Since symptoms occur when you're in a deep sleep many people may not realize they have sleep apnea.

## Signs and Symptoms

- Waking from sleep to gasp for air
- Dry mouth or sore throat upon waking
- Trouble concentrating
- Daytime sleepiness
- Fatigue
- Restless sleep
- Night sweats



## Diagnosis

- A sleep apnea diagnosis requires undergoing a sleep evaluation with a specialist or an overnight sleep study to monitor for symptoms of sleep apnea.

## Treatment

- If you sleep on your back, using a wedge pillow or other position aid to help you sleep on your side
- The use of nasal sprays and breathing strips if currently congested
- Weight loss of 10% or more
- Doctors can prescribe the use of Positive Airway Pressure (PAP) therapy through the use of machines such as a CPAP or Bi-Level PAP that aid in breathing while sleeping.
- Surgery may be used to improve nighttime breathing in severe cases of sleep apnea

## What to avoid

- Alcohol may worsen breathing and result in worsened symptoms of sleep apnea.
- Smoking makes it harder for the body to breathe and increases the symptoms of sleep apnea.
- Certain sleeping pills (antidepressants, anxiety medications, prescription sleep aids, etc.) can reduce the body's ability to breathe. You should always inform all healthcare providers that you have sleep apnea to ensure that you do not receive any of these medications.

Could Sleep Apnea be Causing Your Sleepless Nights?



## Types of Sleep Apnea

- *Central*- when decreased breathing signals from the brain results in reduced oxygen intake
- *Obstructive*- blocked airway that leads to decreased oxygen intake

## Negative Effects of Sleep Apnea

- Increased blood pressure
- Increased cancer risk
- Heart attack or stroke
- Irregular heartbeat
- Heart failure
- Depression
- Diabetes
- Obesity

Brady Kent, PharmD candidate 2023

# State Wellness Center

Clinic Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday 8–5 pm & Thursday 9–5 pm

The State Wellness Center and Pharmacy is a healthcare facility conveniently located in downtown Montgomery offering a variety of services to state and local government employees and their covered dependents ages 12 and older. Our mission is to provide a convenient, economical source of urgent care and preventative care services when you are unable to see your primary healthcare provider. Our team of medical professionals is dedicated to providing the highest quality of care and excellent service while also encouraging a continued relationship with your own personal physician. The State Wellness Center is located at 101 South Union Street, Montgomery, AL.

## Wellness Center Services:

- Treat minor illnesses
- Provide health education & monitoring share information with you physician monitor efficacy & safety of every medication
- Evaluate out-of-pocket medication expense
- Provide smoking cessation & weight loss coaching
- Provide diabetes education & monitoring perform anticoagulation monitoring administer immunizations & injectable medications
- Develop personalized medication plans monitor chronic illnesses
- Perform medication checkups
- Provide medication therapy management services
- Perform sports physicals (ages 12 & up)

## Pharmacy Services:

- With your SEHIP insurance you can fill specialty drugs locally in Montgomery at SEIB pharmacy
- You can pick up medications at our pharmacy or have them scheduled to be delivered to your state office

Pharmacy Hours of Operation:

Monday– Friday 7:30–5:30 pm  
& Thursday 9–5:30 pm

## References:

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- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/insomnia/symptoms-causes/syc-20355167>
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