

WHAT IS A SLEEP STUDY?

A sleep study is a painless test which measures what happens to your body during sleep. These studies are done to find out what is causing your sleep problems. Tests can vary depending on the specifics of an individual's case. The test records several body functions during sleep, including brain activity, eye movement, oxygen and carbon dioxide blood levels, heart rate and rhythm, breathing rate and rhythm, the flow of air through your mouth and nose, snoring, body muscle movements and chest and belly movement.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SLEEP DISORDERS?

The most common sleep problems include:

- **Sleep apnea**, when one regularly stops breathing during sleep for 10 seconds or longer. This may be caused by blocked airflow during sleep, such as from narrowed airways or it may be caused by a problem with how the brain signals the breathing muscles to work.
- **Narcolepsy**; Problems staying awake.
- Problems with nighttime behaviors, such as **sleepwalking, night terrors, or bed-wetting**.
- **Insomnia**; Problems sleeping at night. This may be caused by stress, depression, physical discomfort or other problem.
- **Shift Work**; Problems sleeping during the day because you work at night &/ rotating shift work.
- Conditions such as **periodic limb movement disorder**, which is repeated muscle **twitching** of the feet, arms or legs during sleep.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A SLEEP TEST?

You sleep with electrodes attached to various points on your body. The electrodes go on your head, eyes, chin, and chest. Depending on the type of study ordered by the doctor, the configurations can be different. You wear these electrodes in bed and during the night they collect information. A computer will record your brain waves (indicating the phase of sleep), eye movement (indicating REM sleep), muscle tension and breathing patterns.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SLEEP STUDY?

The results of the test are analyzed by sleep technicians, then reviewed by a board certified sleep medicine physician.

After review, an official report is drawn up and kept on file. If requested, an appointment will be made with a sleep medicine physician to consult and review the detailed results of your test and the evaluation of any therapy. It is preferred that you wait until the sleep study results are available before the follow-up appointment is scheduled. Sleep study results are not generally discussed over the telephone because of their complex nature. To fully understand the results of your sleep study, their implications, and treatment options, you should meet face-to-face with a healthcare professional.