Narcolepsy
Narcolepsy, a disorder of irresistible daytime sleep attacks, is an inherited disorder which may also cause a sudden loss of muscle tone during laughter or excitement. Narcoleptics also experience numerous sleep disruptions at night.

Nocturnal Myoclonus or Restless Legs
This common disorder is typified by jerking muscle movements of the legs and feet which occur throughout the night and disturb normal sleep patterns. The movements may be of such short duration that they hardly awaken the person. However, this disorder often affects the sleep patterns of bedpartners and the sufferer’s fragmented sleep results in daytime sleepiness.

Sleep Disorders and Complaints

Difficulty Initiating and Maintaining Sleep
Researchers have discovered that there are many reasons why people have trouble falling asleep and/or staying asleep, and have made numerous advances in the treatment of this disorder. There can be many causes including general depression, stress or poor sleep habits. St. Peter’s Sleep Center, which utilizes a number of effective treatments, selects a course of treatment based upon the specific disorder.

Sleep Schedule Disorders
Some people have difficulty sleeping during normal bedtime hours. The most common reason for this problem is delayed sleep phase. In most of the population, the body temperature peaks in the evening, falls around bedtime and rises in the morning. With delayed sleep phase, the body’s temperature and internal clock (circadian rhythm system) vary from this standard. Significant advances have been made in treating this disorder. Behavior modification and innovative bright light therapy, appropriately scheduled, actually can reset the internal clock.

Parasomnia
Parasomnia refers to a disorder that occurs in conjunction with sleep such as sleep walking and night terrors. Most parasomniacs do not recall these sleep episodes. While parasomnias occur with relative frequency in children, they also may occur in adults and treatment is determined after evaluation.
Sleep Disorders

Each year, 10 million Americans seek help from their physicians for sleep disorders. These disorders may be triggered by stress or may be the result of a lifetime of sleep difficulties. Either way, effective treatment is often available.

St. Peter’s Sleep Center, a member of St. Peter’s Health Care Services, offers a specialty service established for diagnosing and treating sleep/wake disorders. The center provides professional evaluation and comprehensive sleep monitoring services for a complete range of sleep and wakefulness problems.

The center serves a 24-county region encompassing all of northeastern New York and west central New England. The center is accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

Advancing the study and understanding of sleep/wake disorders, the center’s experienced staff is dedicated to helping people who suffer from some chronic form of sleep disorder find help and lead more satisfying, healthier lives.

Evaluation and Sleep Studies

Once a sleep/wake problem is identified, the center’s sleep specialists design each patient’s evaluation protocols. The center’s hotel-like accommodations are designed to produce a comfortable “homey” atmosphere. The patient is asked to sleep as if they were at home, even though they are constantly being evaluated.

The center’s diagnostic equipment records and documents more than 1,000 pages of data, which is compiled during each night’s sleep and is required for the in-depth evaluation process. Most patients are evaluated during normal sleeping hours. Sleep specialists monitor brain waves, muscle activity, breathing patterns, oxygen levels and heart rate.

Treatment for Sleep/Wake Disorders

After the diagnosis has been established, treatment of sleep disorders can include behavior modification, medication, and surgery or the use of devices which open the upper airways and assist breathing. Treatment, determined on the basis of results of the total sleep evaluation, is tailored to each patient.

Help Is Available

If you or someone you know is experiencing a sleep/wake problem, St. Peter’s Sleep Center is ready to help. Patients should be referred to the center by a primary care physician who recognizes that a patient is suffering from a sleep-related disorder.

Initial office visits and any follow-up care are generally covered under health or insurance plans. Sleep studies are considered to be outpatient procedures and are treated as such by most insurance plans. Patients should check with their individual insurance plans for exact coverage.

The center’s staff will be glad to assist you in determining your insurance coverage and will help you obtain the necessary prior approvals. If referral and/or prior approval is required by your health insurance plan, these must be obtained before services are rendered at the center.

Sleep Disorders and Complaints

Sleep Apnea Syndromes

Sleep apnea is a serious disorder that can be life-threatening. A person with sleep apnea stops breathing at intervals throughout the night. This is often caused by a blockage of the upper airway. Over a period of time, the person often becomes severely sleep deprived and may experience excessive daytime sleepiness. Sleep apnea sufferers may also awaken frequently and can develop heart and lung complications.

Many people who snore have, or will develop, sleep apnea. However, it also can occur in non-snorers.

The airway obstruction associated with sleep apnea may be caused by obesity, by the resting place of the tongue or by other physiological factors.

Treatment may involve the application of a mechanical breathing aid that forces air through the passageway during sleep or the surgical removal of the obstructing tissue.

Sleep Disorders

Taking a multidisciplinary approach – tapping the expertise of local specialists in the fields of otolaryngology, pulmonary medicine, psychology, pediatrics, neurology, dentistry and nutrition – the center evaluates patients with a variety of sleep complaints and disorders including:

- Sleep Apnea Syndromes
- Narcolepsy
- Nocturnal Myoclonus or Restless Legs
- Difficulty initiating and maintaining sleep
- Sleep schedule disorders
- Parasomnia

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