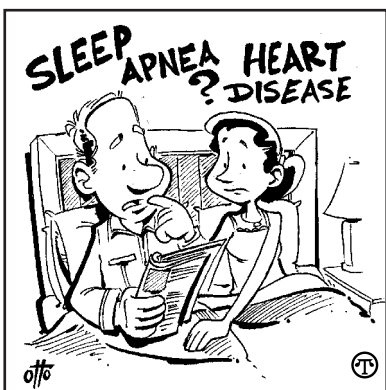


health hints

Sleep Apnea

(NAPSA)—Learning about Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), a serious sleep disorder that affects 20 million Americans, may not only help you sleep better, it could help you live a healthier life. OSA can result in fatigue, headaches, irritability and depression, and a growing body of research now links sleep apnea and heart disease.



Sleep apnea may be linked to heart disease.

A recent Harris Interactive survey found that 55 percent of Americans exhibit or know someone who exhibits symptoms of OSA. This survey also found that 72 percent of Americans are aware that snoring may be a sign of OSA, but only 22 percent of the respondents indicated that they were aware OSA may contribute to heart disease.

“Clinical studies published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *JAMA*, *The Lancet*, and other peer-reviewed journals show a distinct relationship between heart disease and sleep apnea,” said Jerry Dowdy, president of Gyrus ENT, which manufactures the Somnoplasty® surgical system used to treat OSA.

Patients with this disorder have obstructions in the mouth and nose that cause involuntary breathing pauses that can occur 20-60 times per hour—many lasting up to 60 seconds. As a result, oxygen levels can fall dangerously low while the heart works overtime to deliver oxygenated blood.

Somnoplasty is a low-risk, minimally invasive, effective surgical procedure, according to Dr. Lionel M. Nelson, an associate professor at Stanford University, who published a research paper in the Sept. 2001 issue of *ENT Journal*. Nelson found improved response rates of more than 70 percent with no significant side effects. For more information, visit www.somnoplasty.net.