



NATIONAL SLEEP  
FOUNDATION

## How's Your Sleep? Assessment Tool

✓ Check if any of the following apply to you:

- Snore loudly**
- You or others have observed that you stop breathing or gasp for breath during sleep**
- Feel sleepy or doze off while watching TV, reading, driving or engaged in daily activities**
- Have difficulty sleeping 3 nights a week or more (e.g. trouble falling asleep, wake frequently during the night or wake too early and cannot get back to sleep)**
- Feel unpleasant, tingling, creeping feelings or nervousness and the urge to move in your legs when trying to sleep**
- Interruptions to your sleep (e.g., nighttime heartburn, bad dreams, pain, discomfort, noise, sleep difficulties of family members, light or temperature)**

If you have checked one or more of the above statements, you should make an appointment to discuss this with your doctor. Please see below to learn why you may have a sleep problem and what it means.

It is helpful to keep a Sleep Diary for at least a week to record how often you experience these symptoms and to determine if there is a pattern that is keeping you from getting sufficient sleep. You can also use an NSF fact sheet called "Sleep Talk with Your Doctor." It lists additional information and items to share with your doctor.

Both of these resources are available on CD and at the National Sleep Foundation's Web site at [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org). Take both of these to your doctor and make the most of your visit.

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### Sleep Problems are a Serious Threat to Your Health, Safety and Well-being

**Snore loudly.** Snoring occurs when there is a partial blockage of the airway. Snoring has been linked to increased blood pressure and may be a sign of sleep apnea (see below).

**You or others have observed that you stop breathing or gasp for breath during sleep.** Observed pauses in breathing, often accompanied by snoring, are a symptom of a serious condition called sleep apnea. These breathing pauses reduce blood-oxygen levels, strain the heart and cardiovascular system, and contribute to daytime sleepiness (see below).

**Feel sleepy or doze off while watching TV, reading, driving or engaged in daily activities.** Sleepiness during the day or at times when you expect to be awake and alert is a sign that you may be suffering from sleep deprivation, a sleep disorder such as sleep apnea or narcolepsy, or another treatable medical condition. Daytime sleepiness puts you at risk for driving drowsy, injury and illness and can significantly impair your mental abilities, emotions and performance.

**Have difficulty sleeping 3 nights a week or more.** Experiencing any of these insomnia symptoms a few nights a week is not a normal sleep pattern. Untreated insomnia is a risk factor for the onset of depression and can jeopardize your emotional outlook, social relations and sense of well-being. The

toll of sleep loss can also affect your health, your safety and your performance in all areas of life.

**Feel unpleasant, tingling, creeping feelings or nervousness in your legs when trying to sleep.** These feelings in your legs indicate that you may have restless legs syndrome (RLS), a neurological movement disorder characterized by a strong urge to move the legs and difficulty falling and staying asleep.

**Interruptions to your sleep.** Disruptions compromise both the quantity and quality of sleep and keep you from experiencing continuous, restorative sleep so necessary for performance, safety and health. They can be caused by an acute or chronic medical condition, a bright, noisy or uncomfortable environment, or awakenings caused by other people. Determining the causes of any sleep disruptions will help you and your doctor determine the best treatment.



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*Waking America to the Importance of Sleep®*

[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)