



## **Sleep Services for Adults provided by the Scottsdale Sleep Center:**

### ***HOW PAIN AFFECTS SLEEP***

Pain is a leading cause of insomnia. Difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep and waking earlier than desired are all symptoms of insomnia. When pain makes it hard to sleep, falling asleep is often a major problem. However, 65% of those with pain and sleep problems in a 2005 NSF Gallup survey, indicated that they were awakened during the night by pain. And 62% woke up too early because of pain. Many people who experience pain wake up feeling unrefreshed, and also find it difficult to function at their best. Insomnia may be a short-term problem experienced for only a night or two now and then, or it may be chronic, lasting for a month or more.

### ***UNDERSTANDING YOUR PAIN: COMMON CAUSES***

The major causes of sleep loss due to pain are back pain, headaches, and facial pain caused by temporomandibular joint (TMJ) syndrome, which is characterized by pain in and around the ears and soreness of the jaw muscles. Also, musculoskeletal pain, which includes arthritis and fibromyalgia, can lead to poor sleep. Pain from cancer, the disease itself and treatment, is also a major offender in causing poor sleep.

If your sleep difficulty is chronic, you should consult your doctor or a sleep specialist. If you don't get enough sleep, or your sleep is troubled, you, and those around you, may suffer. You could be more susceptible to accidents or at risk for falling asleep at the wheel.

There are a variety of treatments available to ease the sleep problems of chronic pain sufferers, including medication and physical therapy. Doctors may also recommend seeing a psychiatrist or psychologist.

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO TO GET GOOD SLEEP**

Some sleep tips for people with chronic pain are:

- Stop or limit caffeine and alcohol consumption.
- Avoid vigorous exercise. However, a gentle, preferably supervised, fitness program (e.g. walking, swimming, light weight-bearing exercise) carried out on a regular basis is very helpful for improving the quality of sleep and controlling muscle and joint pain.
- Avoid regular naps. If you need to take a nap, do so by mid-afternoon and make it no more than 15-25 minutes.
- Practice relaxation techniques, such as deep abdominal breathing and/or guided imagery.
- Use of pain medication and/or sleeping pills are effective, but should be used under the supervision of a physician.

Please feel free to call the Scottsdale Sleep Center at (480) 767-8811 for more information on how pain affects sleep.