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West Holt Medical Services Moves into the Bedroom with Home Sleep Studies

ATKINSON — Nights are far from peaceful for some people. Some people snore and others may stop breathing dozens of times each hour.

These symptoms may indicate obstructive sleep apnea, a serious disorder that not only robs millions of Americans of restful sleep, if untreated, raises their risk of high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, obesity and diabetes. May also worsen heart failure, make irregular heartbeats more likely and increase the chance of having work-related or driving accidents.

Diagnosing sleep disorders traditionally has involved having the patient spend a night in a sleep lab or center while hooked up to a monitor. Now you can be diagnosed and treated at home. West Holt Medical Services offers a less-expensive home sleep study where you can sleep in your own bed with your own pillow. An anonymous donor gave a cash gift to West Holt Medical Services Foundation to purchase the home sleep study equipment.

The home sleep study measures air flow, the effort people make while breathing and oxygen saturation. The equipment is small and portable and relatively easy to use.
Patients place an air-flow sensor under their nose, put on an elastic chest belt and attach a clip to their finger before going to sleep. During the night, data is recorded for analysis.

Paula Davis, West Holt Medical Services’ Director of Respiratory Care and Sleep, shares, “It can be especially helpful for patients who live far from our hospital’s sleep lab or who are intimidated by laboratory settings. I am so excited to offer this portable service to those in our community and others living a distance away. I feel honored to have a part in this health process that can help answer questions and potentially improve lives. I have seen many, including family members, benefit from the treatment of sleep disorders.”

Dr. John Trapp, Nebraska Pulmonary Specialties, interprets all sleep studies performed at home or in the hospital for West Holt Medical Services. Dr. Trapp holds the following board certifications: Critical Care Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Disease, Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine.

If you think a home sleep study is right for you, please visit with your primary healthcare provider. Together, you can determine if a home study or in-lab study would benefit you.

ABOUT SLEEP APNEA

What is it? A common disorder in which a person experiences one or more breathing pauses or shallow breaths while sleeping. The most common type is obstructive sleep apnea, in which the airway collapses or becomes blocked. It can range from mild to severe and affects adults as well as some children.

Symptoms: Snoring, daytime sleepiness, morning headaches, memory or learning problems or not being able to concentrate, feeling irritable or depressed, waking up frequently to urinate, dry mouth or sore throat upon waking.

Causes: The throat muscles and tongue relax more than normal; the tongue and tonsils are large compared with the opening in the windpipe; the person is overweight or the position of the jawbone.

Diagnosis: Physical exam, medical and family histories, home or in-lab sleep study.

Treatment: Lifestyle changes such as maintaining ideal body weight through dietary modifications and exercise or quitting the use of tobacco products and not using excessive alcohol; mouthpieces or dental appliances to adjust the lower jaw and tongue to help keep airways open; noninvasive ventilator (breathing) devices such as the continuous positive airway pressure machine, which uses a
mask and gently blows air into the throat; surgery to splint open breathing passages.

*Source: National Institutes of Health*

For more information about West Holt Medical Services, please visit www.westholtmed.org, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube.

West Holt Medical Services provides well-rounded family healthcare with respect and understanding for the physical and emotional needs of our North Central Nebraska communities.