

## **News Release**

### **TIME CHANGE — TRICK OR TREAT FOR SLEEP DEPRIVED?**

**ATLANTA, October 12, 2006**—For most people, getting an extra hour to sleep when Daylight Savings time ends October 29 is a sweeter treat than Halloween candy. Studies suggest this extra sleep yields a more significant benefit: a 7 percent decrease in automobile accidents immediately following the fall time change, according to one. Unfortunately, this study shows an 8 percent increase in automobile accidents the Monday after Daylight Savings resumes in the spring, when we lose an hour of sleep.\*

#### **The Link Between Accidents and Sleep**

There is a strong link between accidents and sleep. This is especially true in the very early morning, when disasters such as the recent Comair crash, sinking of the Exxon Valdez, and Three-Mile Island and Chernobyl nuclear accidents have occurred. Atlanta-based sleep medicine specialist Scott Leibowitz, M.D., D., A.B.S.M., comments, "The body's natural circadian rhythms program us to sleep in the early hours of the morning. We naturally are most vulnerable to accidents and critical errors in judgment when our bodies are at their sleepest, usually between 2 a.m. and 5 a.m. For people who suffer from sleep disorders and sleep deprivation, the effect is compounded."

#### **The Cost of Losing Sleep**

As an increasingly common part of modern life, sleep deprivation and sleep disorders have important consequences for many Americans. Approximately 54 percent of Americans say they experience one or more symptoms of insomnia at least a few nights a week; 10-15 percent report having chronic insomnia. The costs, in economic impact and quality of life, are huge. The National Sleep Foundation reports that:

- Direct costs of insomnia, including dollars spent annually on treatment, healthcare services, hospital and nursing home care, are approximately \$14 billion.
- The annual indirect costs of insomnia, including higher accident rates, increased absenteeism and other comorbidities, are estimated at almost \$28 billion.
- Insomnia and other sleep disorders cost U.S. employers an estimated \$18 billion in lost productivity every year.

#### **Obstructive Sleep Apnea – A Dangerous Problem to Ignore**

Although less common than insomnia, obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) affects approximately 20 percent of U.S. adults, according to the National Institutes of Health. OSA occurs when an individual stops breathing repeatedly during sleep because of an obstruction in the throat. Snoring may be a symptom of OSA.

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“If untreated, the consequences of OSA can be, at the least, disruptive, and at worst, life threatening,” says Dr. Leibowitz, medical director of the Sleep Disorders Center of CDS, P.C. Consequences of OSA include:

- Congestive heart failure, stroke, irregular heart rhythms, cardiovascular disease and fatal car accidents.
- Daytime fatigue, depression, irritability, sexual dysfunction, learning and memory problems, and falling asleep while at work, on the phone or driving.
- Increased risk of ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and behavioral problems in children.

### **The Personal Price of Sleep Loss**

There also is a connection between sleep loss and obesity, discovered by researchers at the University of Chicago. Sleep deprivation causes a decrease in the appetite-controlling hormone leptin, which may result in a tendency to overeat. In addition, sleep disorders can take a toll on personal relationships. A National Sleep Foundation poll found that one third of partnered adults reported their partner’s sleep issues cause problems in their relationship. One quarter of respondents said their sexual relationship is affected because of their own or their partner’s sleepiness.

“The good news is that the overwhelming majority of individuals with most sleep disorders respond well to treatment,” says Dr. Leibowitz. “Many people dismiss insomnia and other sleep disorders as something they have to live with, but generally, the appropriate treatment can significantly improve these conditions and patients’ quality of life.”

### **About Dr. Leibowitz**

Dr. Leibowitz recently opened the Sleep Disorders Center of CDS, which helps patients of all ages get a good night’s sleep. Dr. Leibowitz, the medical director of the Sleep Disorders Center, completed a clinical and research fellowship in sleep medicine at Stanford University. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Sleep Medicine (D., A.B.S.M) and is Board certified in internal medicine and sleep medicine.

A faculty member of the Atlanta School of Sleep Medicine, Dr. Leibowitz has written extensively on sleep disorders for medical journals and textbooks. He also has been featured on Atlanta’s WXIA-TV and WAGA-TV, and National Public Radio. In addition to treating adults and adolescents, he is an advocate for pediatric patients with sleep disorders. For more information and to take a sleep quiz, visit [www.cdssleep.com](http://www.cdssleep.com), or call 404-603-7210.

*\*Sources for statistics available on request.*