

Sleep Apnea & Warfarin

Sleep – a time to recharge and repair

Sleep is something you take for granted but appreciate every time we get a restful night. Sleep is one of life's most simple pleasures but it is not guaranteed.

Interruptions to sleep can be more than just an annoyance – it can directly affect your health.

Disturbances

About half of adults over 65 years old experience some sort of sleep problems.¹ One of the more common sleep disturbances includes a disorder called sleep apnea. Sleep apnea affects up to 18 million Americans. The problem is caused by the loss of airway muscle tone resulting in a lack of oxygen to the lungs. Mild sleep apnea may include 4 or more episodes per hour. Severe apnea may include disruption of air flow up to every 30 seconds!

Sleep apnea – a risk after dark

A study of sleep apnea determined the risk for stroke or death in patients with

severe apnea was 3 times that of patients without sleep apnea.² Sleep apnea is being studied to get a better understanding of how this problem increases your risk of stroke.

Risks of sleep tricks

Using a nightcap of alcohol or cold medicine may help you fall asleep more quickly but it robs you of the deep sleep your body needs.² Alcohol can also influence your INR (International Normalized Ratio) test results. If you wake during the evening, you may be drowsy and more likely to suffer a fall. Nightlights may reduce this risk. To improve your safety in the dark, the use of nightlights will help you avoid a fall or a stubbed toe.

Poor quality of sleep makes you drowsier the following day, increasing your chances of making a medication error, having an accident, or making other errors. You should report any sleep problems to your doctor and monitor your INR closely.

For more information on improving your safety,
visit **www.PTINR.com** or call **1-877-262-4669**



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1 National Institute for Neurological Disorders and Stroke. 2007.

2 Yaggi, H.K., et al. Obstructive Sleep Apnea as a Risk Factor for Stroke and Death. N Engl J Med 2005; 353:2034-2041