A number of sleep disorders can disrupt your sleep quality and make you overly sleepy during the day, even if you spent enough time in bed to be well rested. Sleep disorders affect at least 40 million Americans and account for an estimated $16 billion in medical costs each year.

The four most common sleep disorders:

1. **Insomnia**
2. **Sleep apnea**
3. **Restless legs syndrome**
4. **Narcolepsy**

### Common Signs of a Sleep Disorder

- Takes you more than 30 minutes to fall asleep at night
- Waking up frequently in the middle of the night and having a hard time falling back asleep
- Waking up too early in the morning
- Not feeling well rested even after getting an adequate 7-8 hours of sleep at night
- Snoring or interrupted breathing for short periods of time throughout the night
- Legs or arms jerk often during sleep

### Action Steps to Help Improve Your Sleep

- Keep a sleep diary. Recording your daytime and nighttime habits can help to pinpoint certain behaviors that may need a change
- Keep a regular sleep schedule
- Set aside enough time for sleep. The average adult needs 7-8 hours per night
- Make sure your room is dark, cool and quiet. These are all strong cues for sleep
- Turn off the TV, computers and phones. Too much stimulation before bedtime can cause sleepless nights
- Practice relaxation exercises
- Talk with your doctor if you suspect you have any signs of a sleep disorder.
**Insomnia**: Having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, or not having refreshing sleep despite having ample opportunity to sleep. Chronic insomnia is defined as having symptoms at least 3 nights per week for more than 1 month. Insomnia often causes problems during the day, such as extreme sleepiness, fatigue, a lack of energy, difficulty concentrating, depressed mood, and irritability. Untreated insomnia can impair quality of life as much as other chronic medical problems.

**Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)**: An unpleasant prickling or tingling in the legs, especially in the calves, that is relieved by moving or massaging them. People who have RLS feel a need to stretch or move their legs to get rid of the uncomfortable or painful feelings. As a result, it may be difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep.

**Sleep Apnea**: (also referred to as sleep-disordered breathing) Breathing briefly stops or becomes very shallow during sleep. Each pause in breathing typically lasts 10–120 seconds and may occur 20–30 times or more each sleeping hour. If you have sleep apnea, not enough air can flow into your lungs through your mouth and nose during sleep, even though breathing efforts continue. Having sleep apnea causes lack of deep sleep which leads to excessive sleepiness during the day. In some cases, being overweight causes sleep apnea, and with weight loss can bring relief.

**Narcolepsy**: Extreme and overwhelming daytime sleepiness, even after adequate nighttime sleep. People who have narcolepsy often fall asleep at inappropriate times and places. Narcolepsy can cause sudden muscle weakness, sleep paralysis and vivid dreams.

The information contained in these materials is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. You should always consult your physician or other qualified healthcare provider for a medical diagnosis or before starting any new treatment or discontinuing an existing treatment. Talk with your healthcare provider about any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

For more information visit:  
U.S Dept. of Health and Human Services  