

**FirstHealth**  
OF THE CAROLINAS

Sleep Disorders

Women  
&  
Sleep Apnea



# Women & Sleep Apnea

## Experiencing Changes in Mood, Concentration and Weight Gain?

Often misdiagnosed or simply never addressed, sleep apnea is a common sleep disorder that could be wreaking havoc on your health — and your weight.

### Common Symptoms of Sleep Apnea in Women

- Restless Leg Syndrome
- Depression
- Insomnia
- Weight gain
- Morning headaches and sickness
- High blood pressure

### The Reality of Sleep Apnea

There are so many things that can sabotage the quality of your sleep that it's tough to keep track: the food and drinks you consume, the time of day you exercise, the amount of time you spend working in your bedroom, your TV and computer habits before bed, the temperature of your room, allergens and dust, and so on. Throw in some stress, anxiety and your desire to “do it all,” and getting a good night's sleep can be quite the challenge for a woman.

These factors aren't necessarily why some women wake up constantly throughout the night and then spend their days exhausted, however. The culprit could be sleep apnea, a disorder in which you stop breathing multiple times throughout the night, which causes your body to panic and wake you up.

Sleep apnea is much more common in overweight women whose airways get blocked because of the excess fat, but it can occur in healthy-sized women, too. Because the relationship between poor sleep and poor weight management is a vicious one, it can be extremely difficult to lose weight when you're sleep deprived. Sleep apnea doesn't just hurt your chances of losing weight. There can be serious chronic health consequences, including hypertension, diabetes, heart failure and more.

Sleep apnea has even been linked to dementia in women.

### What should I do if I think I have a Sleep Problem?

If you think you have a sleep-related disorder, consult your physician. You will need a referral from your physician to make an appointment at one of the FirstHealth Sleep Centers.

# FirstHealth

SLEEP DISORDERS

Montgomery Memorial Hospital

520 Allen St., Troy, NC 27371 • (910) 571-5600

Moore Regional Hospital

155 Memorial Drive, Pinehurst, NC 28374 • (910) 715-3338

Moore Regional Hospital-Richmond

925 Long Drive, Rockingham, NC 28379 • (910) 417-3952

[www.firsthealth.org/sleep](http://www.firsthealth.org/sleep)