

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

HALIFAX REGIONAL UPDATES SLEEP CENTER

ROANOKE RAPIDS, NC (September 2, 2010)—Halifax Regional has updated the rooms in its Sleep Center for a modern, home-like appearance.

The rooms have new equipment, including flat-screen televisions, and are more modern. “Our rooms have more of a home bedroom environment,” said Doris Ivey, coordinator of the Sleep Center. “Patients appreciate the home-like environment.”

“The Sleep Center is qualified to investigate problems such as sleep apnea, narcolepsy, night time dreams, movement disorders and certain neurological disorders,” said N. Sekaran, MD, medical director.

Patients check into a private room in the Medical Center, watch some television, and then sleep while the analysis takes place.

“During the night, we measure a number of conditions, including brain waves, oxygen level, snoring, heartbeat and eye movement,” said Dr. Sekaran. Patients are discharged early the next morning.

Sleep apnea is a widespread disease, but is not diagnosed often and can be a serious risk to an individual’s health. “Left untreated, snoring and sleep apnea are a contributing risk factor in high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and depression,” said Dr. Sekaran.

Sleep apnea occurs when the upper airway becomes too narrow, causing breathing difficulties. “If the airway becomes completely blocked and the individual temporarily stops breathing, that is called an “obstructive apnea,” which can last for 10 seconds or longer and may happen frequently during the night,” Dr. Sekaran explained.

Following are some signs of sleep apnea:

- Your partner has noticed that you gasp or stop breathing during sleep.
- You often wake up feeling tired.
- You sometimes feel excessively sleepy during the day.
- Your energy and motivation levels have decreased.
- You find it difficult to concentrate.

If you have sleep apnea, there is an effective treatment, called nasal positive airway pressure therapy. A device at your bedside delivers pressurized air through a small mask or nasal pillows system. This pressure acts like an “air sprint” to keep your upper airway open and help prevent apneas.

The treatment involves no drugs or surgery and helps you enjoy a healthier sleep and a healthier life, says Dr. Sekaran.

If you are having difficulty sleeping, call Doris Ivey at 252 535-8216.

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About Halifax Regional

Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 204 beds, including psychiatric and nursery. A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit www.halifaxregional.org.