**Session 5 – Sleep Tight**

*(handout 1)*

***Check if any of these apply to you:***

* Snore loudly
* You or others have observed that you stop breathing or gasp for breath during sleep
* Feel sleepy or doze off while watching TV, reading, driving, or engaging in daily activities
* Have difficulty sleeping 3 nights a week or more (e.g., trouble falling asleep, wake frequently during the night or wake too early and cannot get back to sleep)
* Feel unpleasant, tingling, creeping feelings or nervousness and the urge to move in your legs when trying to sleep
* Interruptions to your sleep (e.g., nighttime heartburn, bad dreams, pain, discomfort, noise, sleep difficulties of family members, light, or temperature)

If you have checked one or more of the above statements, you should make an appointment to discuss this with your doctor. Please see below to learn why you may have a sleep problem and what it means. It is helpful to keep a Sleep Diary for at least a week to record how often you experience these symptoms and to determine if there is a pattern that is keeping you from getting sufficient sleep. You can also use a National Sleep Foundation fact sheet called *“Sleep Talk with Your Doctor”.* It lists additional information and items to share with your doctor. Take both of these to your doctor and make the most of your visit. Both of these resources are available at the National Sleep Foundation's website at: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org>

**SLEEP PROBLEMS ARE A SERIOUS THREAT TO YOUR HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELL-BEING**

**Snore loudly.** Snoring occurs when there is a partial blockage of the airway. Snoring has been linked to increased blood pressure and sleep apnea.

**Gasping for breath during sleep.** Observed pauses in breathing, often accompanied by snoring, are a symptom of a serious condition called *sleep apnea*. These breathing pauses reduce blood-oxygen levels, strain the heart and cardiovascular system, and contribute to daytime sleepiness.

**Dozing while engaging in daily activities.** Sleepiness at times when you expect to be awake and alert might indicate sleep deprivation, or other treatable sleep related conditions. Daytime sleepiness puts you at risk for injury, illness, and can significantly impair your mental abilities, emotions, and performance.

**Difficulty sleeping 3 or more nights a week.** Experiencing insomnia symptoms a few nights a week is not a normal sleep pattern. Untreated insomnia is a risk factor for the onset of depression and can jeopardize safety, performance, social relations and overall well-being.

**Tingling, creeping feelings in your legs during sleep.** These feelings indicate that you may have restless leg syndrome (RLS), a neurological movement disorder characterized by a strong urge to move the legs and difficulty falling and staying asleep.

**Interruptions to your sleep.** Disruptions compromise both the quantity and quality of sleep and keep you from experiencing continuous, restorative sleep necessary for performance, safety, and health.