

# *Awake in Philly*

## *Community Education Group*

**Publisher of *The Sleep-e Times***

<http://www.AwakeInPhilly.org> • [PhillyAwake@scoop0901.net](mailto:PhillyAwake@scoop0901.net)

Philadelphia, PA 19152-1114 • 253-423-7208 (fax)

---

### ***Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, April 9, 2003***

Source: <http://www.AwakeInPhilly.org/Meetings/2003/apr2003/Apr9minutes.shtml>

#### **A. OPENING STATEMENTS**

Michele Jackson called to order the regular meeting of the Awake in Philly Community Awareness Group at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 9, 2003 in the Conference Room at the Northeast Regional Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia. After calling the meeting to order, Michele Jackson led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Michele Narcavage welcomed everyone, followed by her reading the standard disclaimer.

#### **B. DISCUSSION**

Tonight's guest speaker is Dr. Cantor from Penn Sleep Centers. Dr. Cantor is the medical director of the Penn Sleep Centers. He also serves as medical director of the affiliated Pennsylvania Hospital Disorders Center, as well as a neurological consultant to the University of Pennsylvania's Center for sleep disorders. Dr. Cantor is also a clinical assistant professor of Neurology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

There are three states of the brain; first, the wakefulness state, which is where you are awake; second, Rapid Eye Movement, or REM sleep, this is where you remember your dreams and are able to learn; and finally, non-REM sleep, this is the most refreshing sleep and you will not remember your dreams in this state. If you go through life partially awake, and partially asleep you may have a sleep disorder called narcolepsy, which is when you fall into non-REM sleep at inappropriate times.

The brain wave of someone who is in REM sleep look identical to the brain waves of someone is non-REM sleep. You will go through REM sleep 4-5 times a night, this means that approximately every 90 minutes you will be in this kind of sleep. The length of the cycles of REM sleep will increase as the night goes on. You spend the majority of the night in stage 2 sleep and ¼ the night in REM sleep. Some of the excessive sleepiness issues we need to deal with are:

- *Motor vehicle accidents*
- *Accidents in the workplace*
- *Improper productivity*
- *Inappropriate moods*

When you visit your doctor's office his goals will be to find out about your sleep history, the options that would be suitable for you, get you to a sleep study, and seek proper treatment. The three most important questions a sleep doctor should ask you are; one, do you sleep during the day; two, do you sleep well during the night; and three, do you experience weird events through the night such as sleep walking?

When going to the doctor, his main focus will be on determining if you are fatigued, have an inability to concentrate, or if you are suffering from depression. Remember that if you don't fall asleep by accident then you probably do not have a sleep disorder. To find a person's degree of sleepiness, they need to undergo what is known as the "multiple sleep latency test," or MSLT. This test is much like the "maintenance of wakefulness test" or MWT. The MSLT is used to determine how long it takes a person to fall asleep every

---

two hours for 15 minutes at a time. The MWT is used to determine how prone a person is to falling asleep when sitting alone, in the dark, with no external stimuli.

Some of the diagnoses' are:

- Insufficient Sleep
- Sleep disordered Breathing
- Restless Legs
- Narcolepsy
- Idiopathic Hyper somnolence
- Delayed Sleep Phase
- Toxic/Metabolic/Structural etiologies

As when going to see any other doctor, you will need a list of the medicine(s) you are taking, your medical history, family medical history, and you will receive a physical.

In 1992, obstructive sleep apnea affected four percent to just over eight percent of males. Dr. Cantor says that insufficient sleep is caused by the shift workers irregular sleep schedule and different week and weekend sleep schedules.

When being examined for restless legs the doctor will ask if you kick your legs or flail your arms while asleep, if you wake up very tired, and if you can't sit still while awake you probably suffer something called Restless Legs Syndrome, or RLS, which is common, but usually not recognized by family physicians.

Some of the side effects of narcolepsy are cataplexy, which is a loss in muscle tone; an inability to move while in bed or in REM sleep; dream-like experiences while waking or falling asleep. People with narcolepsy also tend to suffer from hypersomnolence, they feel weak, and may experience sleep paralysis. People with narcolepsy may also experience bouts of little or no muscle control, called cataplexy. These cataplexic attacks may last anywhere from seconds to minutes. These bouts are generally brought on by strong emotions. When this happens the patient will fall to the ground and not be able to move – this usually happens while fully conscious. To help dealing with narcolepsy in everyday life, a person may be prescribed stimulants to help keep them awake. One of the more commonly prescribed medications is modafinil, which is marketed by Cephalon, Inc., under the trade name of Provigil.

Dr. Cantor's closing word was that every sleep disorder is treatable – just not curable at the present time.

### C. INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSION/SUPPORT ISSUES

- **Question 1:** What can I do if I have Narcolepsy? Are there any medications that you recommend?
  - **Answer 1:** There is a new medication coming out on the market. Talk to your doctor.
- **Question 2:** Is there a relationship between Obstructive Sleep Apnea and Alzheimer's?
  - **Answer 2:** The damage done by Sleep Apnea is usually not permanent. If untreated for years you may experience hypertension and strokes. As of right now there is no link with Alzheimer's.
- **Question 3:** Are there any implications with the heart if you do not treat mild Sleep Apnea?
  - **Answer 3:** We don't know what is so mild that there is no treatment needed or encouraged.

### D. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SPONSORS

Awake in Philly sponsors, in alphabetical order, include: B.F Ascher &Co.; Fisher and Paykel; Free Library of Phila. (NE Regional Library); Maril Products; Puritan-Bennett; and Respironics, Inc.

### E. AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is slated for Wednesday, May 14, 2003 at 6:30 p.m., in the Conference Room at the Northeast Regional Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The speaker will be Larry Wright from Puritan-Bennett, who will speak on the topic of "*Maintaining the Lifeline.*"

### F. ADJOURNMENT

Dave Jackson adjourned meeting at 8:20 p.m.