What is Sleep Apnea?

It is a common sleep disorder, causing you to repeatedly stop and start breathing throughout your sleep cycle. Millions of people are affected by it, often without being aware that it is happening.

You may have sleep apnea if you snore loudly and you feel tired even after a full night's sleep.

There are two main types of sleep apnea: **Obstructive** (due to a blocked airway) or **Central** (usually due to a neurological cause such as stroke).

Who is at Risk?

Males, obese or elderly people are at a higher risk of developing sleep apnea.

**Symptoms of Sleep Apnea**

- Excessive daytime sleepiness or drowsiness
- Loud snoring, more common with obstructive sleep apnea
- Stopping and starting of breathing, usually noticed by someone else
- Waking up abruptly due to shortness of breath
- Dry mouth or sore throat upon awakening
- Waking up with a headache
- Insomnia
- Attention problems

If you think you might have sleep apnea, see your health care provider. Treatment is necessary to avoid potential heart problems, diabetes and other complications. There are treatment options available.

Resources:  
- [http://www2.nami.org/](http://www2.nami.org/)