

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day Lake Region Healthcare's health and welfare segment, where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier lifestyle. This is Katie Johnson. I'm your host. My guest today is Becca Sundby. She is an LPN in our clinic, working alongside Dr. Eva Berro, our pulmonologist. She's our guest today as we talk about May Healthy Sleep month. Good morning Becca.

Becca Sundby: Good morning.

Katie Johnson: When we think about healthy sleep, I have lots of questions for you about sleep studies and the importance of good sleep. Before we dive into that, let's just introduce our listeners to you and what your background is. How long have you been at Lake Regional Healthcare and working in pulmonology?

Becca Sundby: I've been in pulmonology since January, but I've been an LPN at Lake Region for four years.

Katie Johnson: What is it that you like about working in pulmonology?

Becca Sundby: It's a really rewarding specialty because breathing is so essential to life. We have some very sick patients, and we work with them to try to make their life more comfortable. That's very satisfying work.

Katie Johnson: What exactly is pulmonology?

Becca Sundby: Pulmonology is any health condition that deals with the lungs. We see a lot of patients with COPD or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Asthma, different lung bronchiectasis, different lung conditions. Dr. Berro is also certified in sleep medicine, which is kind of like a co-specialty.

Katie Johnson: When you say sleep medicine, I know we oftentimes think of sleep apnea as probably the most common sleep disorder, but what exactly is a sleep disorder? How does it differ from just having trouble sleeping or insomnia?

Becca Sundby: With a sleep disorder, specifically sleep apnea, the patient actually has periods where they're not breathing during their sleep. It can cause many complications.

Katie Johnson: How often or how common is sleep an element or a component in the problems that the patients who present to you have?

Becca Sundby: We see lots of sleep medicine patients. When they're not sleeping well, their entire health suffers because of it.

Katie Johnson: Do you have some general tips or guidelines for health sleep that you often share with patients?

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Becca Sundby: Some of the most important things that Dr. Berro likes to tell our patients is to form good sleep habits. No TV or electronics when you're in your bed. Your bed is for sleeping, and you shouldn't read or do other activities in your bed. That is your way of telling your body that you should go to sleep. If you're doing other things there, then your body doesn't get used to it.

Katie Johnson: That's really interesting, a really good tip. How often is a sleep study a necessary component to diagnosing a sleep problem?

Becca Sundby: Whenever a patient comes in and complains of symptoms of sleep apnea, such as excessive daytime sleepiness, even though they're going to bed at a regular time, we start to question this. That might be something to consider.

Katie Johnson: What exactly is involved in a sleep study?

Becca Sundby: Well, sleep the studies are done right here at Lake Region by a company called Winmar that we work with. They come at bedtime, which is usually around nine o'clock. They get hooked up to some monitors that monitor ways which you move, and breath, and how good of quality sleep you're getting. Then, if halfway through the study you start showing signs of apnea, which is when you stop breathing while you sleep, sometimes they'll trial a CPAP machine. Which is the forced air that helps your airway stay open during the night.

Katie Johnson: Does Dr. Berro have anything to do with reading or analyzing those results for the patient?

Becca Sundby: The technician from Winmar will send the results to Dr. Berro. Then she looks at all of the raw data, and she transcribes it all, and interprets what it means.

Katie Johnson: You mentioned the CPAP is sometimes recommended as the result of a sleep study. What kind of results do you see with patients who use a CPAP machine? I hear people say, "I could never sleep with one of those. I don't even want to have a sleep study because I don't think that I could sleep with those." I'm curious what kind of results you see and what you hear from patients who end up with them?

Becca Sundby: Once they have gotten through the adjustment stage of CPAP sleep, they can't sleep without it. Some people get used to it right away. Some we work with, but we have several different medical supply companies that we work with. They all have technicians that will help you find masks, and straps, and different settings that make it the most comfortable it can be for you as the patient. Then, we do a regular checkup until you're established, just to make sure that it's as beneficial to you as possible.

Katie Johnson: Having Lake Region Home Medical Supply right here in town, I'm guessing it helps make that more convenient for patients too.

Becca Sundby: Yes. It's very convenient. They're willing to have you come in and trial different

mask types, to look at them, touch them, see what you think would be comfortable. They're very helpful.

Katie Johnson: Any other tips or things that you'd like to add from your experience working with people who are having difficulty with their sleep?

Becca Sundby: Just if you think that might be something, don't ignore it because it won't go away on its own. It can lead to other possible complications if it goes untreated.

Katie Johnson: Good sleep certainly is one of the main components of overall health and wellness. We're so pleased that Dr. Berro is here in our pulmonology department, and has a great compassionate nurse like you helping her alongside these patients to help them improve their sleep. Becca Sundby, LPN, at Lake Region Healthcare in our pulmonology department, our guest today on Apple a Day during May Healthy Sleep month. Thanks for joining me Becca.

Becca Sundby: Thank you Katie.

Katie Johnson: Becca and Katie on Apple a Day remind you that there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.