



About the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre's Sleep Disorders Services

Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre

The Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre's (ROMHC) Sleep Disorders Services feature a 'Sleep Lab', which is a diagnostic facility specializing in the evaluation and management of all sleep disorders including insomnia, sleep apnea, narcolepsy, and periodic limb movements (PLMs).

We are interested in sleep problems associated with Rapid Eye Movement ('REM') sleep, the relationship between eye movements and sleep, sleep in older adults (geriatric sleep) and sleepwalking.

Diagnosing Sleep Disorders

The primary diagnostic tool of the Sleep Lab is called a *nocturnal polysomnogram*. This procedure requires clients to sleep for a night within the supervised setting of the Sleep Lab while expert technicians monitor and record certain aspects of a person's sleep using a variety of specialized equipment, including an analysis of snoring, body position, breathing patterns, and nocturnal (nighttime) behaviours documented with video monitoring/recording equipment.

The Sleep Lab also offers Multiple Sleep Latency Tests (MSLTs). MSLTs

are used to assess sleepiness during the daytime. Excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) is a characteristic of certain conditions such as narcolepsy, sleep apnea and periodic limb movements (PLMs). EDS can interfere with how well someone functions during the day, as well as their mental and physical health.

In fact, sleepiness is often responsible for many industrial accidents and over half a million car accidents which occur in North America each year. For the MSLT, clients take four 20-minute naps throughout the day and if the client falls asleep in less than five minutes on average, then this indicates that sleepiness may be a significant health problem.

All diagnostic procedures are conducted according to internationally-accepted guidelines. Polysomnograms and MSLTs are interpreted using computer-generated graphs and tables. Any sleep abnormalities found are reviewed by a physician who has passed a specialty training course in sleep medicine. Then suggestions for treatment and management of sleep disorders are provided to each patient by this specialist physician.

Fast Facts

- All of the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre's Sleep Disorders Services are fully covered by OHIP for Ontario residents. Usually, the patient's family physician is the one to refer patients to the ROMHC for diagnosis.
- To refer a patient to the ROMHC's Sleep Disorders Services, a written request from a medical doctor outlining the case should be faxed to 613.722.5048.
- The Sleep Lab also offers specialized training for sleep medicine technicians and professionals, public education and awareness, consultations in a variety of sleep-related areas, and hosts research projects related to sleep.

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What can I expect if I sleep in the lab?

You may be asked to spend a night in the Sleep Lab, since the only way to determine the nature of a sleep disorder is to record sleep. When you arrive at the Sleep Lab please note that the door to the outpatient department is usually locked at that time so ring the doorbell and have a seat. The technician on duty will come and let you in.

Between 9:00 and 10:30 p.m. the technician will position small sensors at certain spots on the body to monitor brain waves, eye movements, muscle tone, heart rhythms, leg activity, and breathing while you sleep.

Attaching the sensors usually takes between 20 and 35 minutes so you will have time to relax or read before bedtime. These sensors are not uncomfortable — most people become accustomed to them quickly, and they won't prevent you from moving around in bed during the night.

The information from these recordings is used to compare your sleep to that of healthy sleepers matching your age. Please don't

nap during the daytime before you come to the Sleep Lab.

Sometimes your sleep may be examined both at night and during the following day using the Multiple Sleep Latency Test described earlier. This test uses 4-5 naps about 20 minutes in length at two-hour intervals to discover how sleepy you are during the day.

Do I need to bring anything to the sleep lab?

We recommend that you bring whatever you would like to wear when you sleep. Many people also find it easier to sleep with their own pillow.

Is there anything I need to do before I sleep in the lab?

During the week(s) prior to your sleep recording, try to go to sleep around 11 p.m. and get up around 7 a.m. as much as possible, and don't take naps. We understand that everyone's schedule is different so just try your best. During this time you should also complete the questionnaires you were given, and the sleep/wake log.

Fast Facts continued

- To learn more about sleep disorders, please see the fact sheet 'About Sleep Disorders'.
- For answers to more frequently asked questions, please see 'Ask The Sleep Disorders Centre Staff — Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4'.
- For tips to improve sleep quality, please see the fact sheet 'Good Sleep Habits & Suggested Reading Material'.

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What if I need to get up during the night?

No problem. Each room is equipped with a call button. You can page the technologist and he/she will simply go in and unplug you, then you can get up. Do not hesitate to contact the technologist for any reason during the night. They will be happy to help!

For more information about the Sleep Disorders Centre, please call 613.722.6521, ext. 6226, or visit www.rohcg.on.ca.

Contact Us

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