

Healthier Living

Soothing Stress May Reduce Sleepless Nights

(NAPSA)—Learning more about the differences between everyday stress and an anxiety disorder could help keep you from tossing and turning.

While stress and anxiety are a normal part of life, anxiety disorders, which affect 40 million adults, are the most common psychiatric illnesses in the U.S.—and they are on the increase.

They are identified as generalized anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, social anxiety disorder and specific phobias.

According to the 2007 Stress & Anxiety Disorders Survey, commissioned by the Anxiety Disorders Association of America (ADAA), seven out of 10 Americans say they experience stress or anxiety daily and most say it interferes at least moderately with their lives.

About one-third report daily persistent stress or excessive anxiety or that they have had an anxiety or panic attack. Seven out of 10 of those adults say they have trouble sleeping.

But sleeping is also a coping mechanism: Thirty-two percent of women and 25 percent of men say they sleep more during stressful times, and nearly half sleep more to manage their daily symptoms.

ADAA hopes to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of anxiety disorders as well as the treatment options.

“Undiagnosed and untreated anxiety disorders can adversely



A new study found that one-third of Americans experience daily stress and anxiety, which can cause problems sleeping.

affect people's lives in many areas, including their sleep,” said Jerilyn Ross, MA, LICSW, president and CEO of ADAA. “The good news is that they are highly treatable.”

Although relatively few adults have actually been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, the survey shows a significant increase in such a diagnosis in 2007 (14 percent), compared to results of a similar survey in 2005 (7 percent). Among other 2007 survey findings:

- More adults are under treatment for anxiety disorders (8 percent in 2007 vs. 5 percent in 2005).
- More adults believe that their anxiety is irrational, persistent or excessive (30 percent in 2007 vs. 22 percent in 2005).
- Three-fourths of adults whose sleep is affected by stress or anxiety say that their sleep problems have increased their stress and anxiety.

Visit www.adaa.org for more information about anxiety disorders and sleep.