

Sleeping disorders common among students

■ Difficulty sleeping may be a symptom of other mental or physical ailments

By Brooke Ross
Oregon Daily Emerald

For those people who suffer from sleeping disorders, getting enough shut-eye could be more than a struggle — it may be an indicator of mental or physical sickness.

Common sleep disorders can be indicators of mental problems such as depression, or physical problems that can endanger a person's life while sleeping, according to physicians and counselors at the University Health Center.

Dr. Gerald Fleischli, director of the University Health Center, said sleeping disorders are a common problem among University students.

"I might easily see a couple cases a week," he said, adding there are probably many more students who suffer but don't seek help.

"A lot of patients don't come in because they think this is what happens in college; they're not supposed to sleep well," he said.

Fleischli said there are many sleeping disorders and some can endanger a person's life. One of these, sleep apnea, is when people stop breathing during sleep either because their tongues fall in the back of their mouths or because their neck muscles put pressure on the airway during sleep.

"Your brain figures out you're suffocating and the body wakes up, but you won't remember it in the morning," he said.

Fleischli said sleep apnea is more common in older people, but obese people of any age are at risk.

But one disorder, which Fleischli said is common among young adults, is sleep phase disorder in which one's sleeping patterns are random and change from day to day.

"Most think this is a result of students' lifestyles," he said. "College students like to stay up late and party, but this is a misconception."

He said because students often have early classes on certain days of the week and later ones on other days, students' sleep patterns are disrupted from day to day.

Fleischli said sleep phase disorder is a developmental process that young people go through early in childhood because school usually starts too early for them.

He said it is best if people regulate their daily body rhythms by going to bed and getting up at the same times every day, including weekends.

"Some students don't realize sleep is so important to keeping them on the go," he said.

Ron Miyaguchi, senior staff psychologist at the University Counseling Center, said sleeping problems are often an indicator of depression or an anxiety disorder.

"Sleep disorders are common symptoms, but the big question is a symptom of what," he said.

He said depression is often under-diagnosed, but differences in one's appetite and sleep patterns are usually indicators of the disorder.

He said insomnia, which causes a person to have trouble falling asleep, can be a symptom of depression.

"If I'm feeling sad it's easy to overlook, but if I'm laying in bed that's a little more obvious," Miyaguchi said, referring to the thought

process a person might have.

If a person begins to sleep significantly more or less than usual, that may also be a signal something is wrong, he said. Changes in sleep patterns may also be signals of anxiety disorders, such as obsessive compulsive disorder.

"A lot depends on the nature of why people can't sleep," he said. "If sleeping difficulties become a continuing pattern, it is helpful to seek medical assistance or counseling."

Miyaguchi said although the counseling center sees several patients whose sleep disorders are caused by mental problems, he said many students don't seek help because they don't believe their symptoms are serious enough.

"Most students would want to wait it out, but not being able to sleep should be taken seriously," he said.

While symptoms of depression may be easier to recognize, the ways sleep disorders affect a person's physical health are not as noticeable.

But Joanne Baniago, a sophomore biology major, knows the importance of keeping a stable sleep-

Ways to improve sleeping habits

Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol in the late afternoon and evening.

Exercise regularly, but do so at least three hours before bedtime.

If sleeping is difficult at night, do not nap during the day.

Establish a regular and relaxing bedtime routine, such as taking a warm bath each night.

If sleeping attempts have failed after 30 minutes, get out of bed and engage in a relaxing activity such as reading.

Get up and go to bed at the same time every day.

Courtesy of
www.britishsleepfoundation.org.uk/

ing schedule. She said she has a different class schedule throughout the week but tries to go to bed and get up at the same time each day.

"I'm less tired if I have a daily regime, but if I'm in the middle of homework I won't go to bed until it's done," she said.

Japanese government suspects negligence by sub crew

By Joseph Coleman
The Associated Press

TOKYO — The Japanese government suspects "grave negligence" by the crew of a U.S. submarine that sank a Japanese fishing vessel and may push for disciplinary action, a top spokesman said Thursday.

The comments came as family members of the victims met separately with Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori and U.S. Ambassador Thomas Foley. They requested that every effort be made to salvage the vessel and recover the bodies.

The rising tension over the Feb. 9 accident comes after U.S. investigators said the USS Greeneville spotted a ship in the area more than an hour before the collision off the coast of Hawaii. Nine Japanese —

including four high school students — are missing and presumed dead.

"The U.S. submarine made a sudden surfacing despite the detection of a boat — that indicates grave negligence," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told reporters. "We take it as a grave matter, and we must take measures on our own," he added without elaborating.

Fukuda said his government looked forward to a full account of the causes of the accident in a Navy court of inquiry next Monday. Tokyo would push for "strict disciplinary steps on the U.S. side" if necessary, he said.

Japanese also criticized news that a crewman who was plotting sonar readings was distracted by civilian guests and halted his work. Many

have been outraged that civilians were even allowed in the sub's control room.

"It is quite natural that we should ask the United States government for a thorough investigation," Mori was quoted by Kyodo News service and national broadcaster NHK as telling reporters.

Fifteen relatives of the victims met with Mori and Foley in Tokyo on Thursday. They urged Mori to take an active role in the investigation of the accident, and not to leave the decision about whether to raise the Ehime Maru to the United States alone.

The relatives said they were desperate to have "some remembrance" of their missing loved ones, said Kazuhiko Koshikawa, the prime minister's deputy press sec-

retary. They also asked the Japanese government to arrange a meeting between them and President Bush.

Mori expressed his sympathies and promised to "make every effort" to fulfill their requests, Koshikawa said.

The families have been pushing for Cmdr. Scott Waddle to come to their small town in southwestern Japan and apologize directly to them, though they did not mention that demand to Mori, the spokesman added.

That is unlikely in any case, however, because of the legal implications of taking responsibility before the investigation is completed.

The families did get an apology from the U.S. ambassador during their meeting Thursday evening, Japanese media reported. The U.S.

Embassy declined comment on it.

A string of apologies have already been made by the U.S. government, including by Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell.

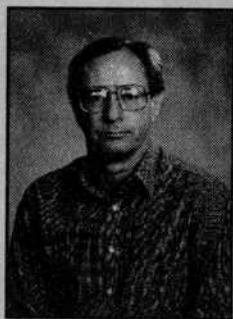
Anger over the accident has also compounded tensions over the heavy U.S. military presence on the southern island of Okinawa, where crimes linked to American troops have heightened calls for a reduction of forces there.

Both the U.S. and the Japanese governments have made strong efforts to prevent the accident from damaging their long-term strategic relationship. Japan is host to 47,000 American troops under a security treaty that forms the bedrock of the U.S. military posture in Asia.

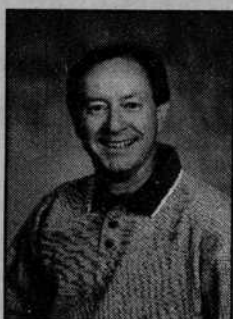
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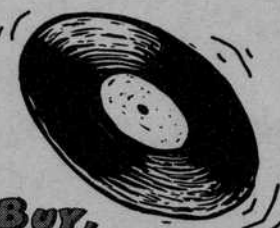
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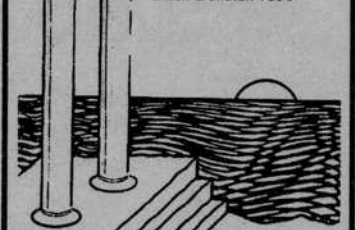
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