

Tailored Approach to Sleep Health Education Materials— Glossary

The following glossary of terms related to sleep health was developed by faculty in NYU Langone's Department of Population Health as part of their Tailored Approach to Sleep Health Education study.

Antidepressants: medication that may relieve symptoms of depression (gethealthyharlem.org).

Body Mass Index (BMI): a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to adult men and women (nhlbi.nih.gov).

Caffeine: a substance that is found in certain plants. It can also be man-made and added to foods. It is a central nervous system stimulant and a diuretic; substance that helps rid your body of fluids (nlm.nih.gov).

Cardiovascular Disease: disease of the heart and blood vessels (gethealthyharlem.org).

Cataplexy: an abrupt temporary loss of voluntary muscular function and tone, evoked by an emotional stimulus such as laughter, pleasure, anger, or excitement (medicinenet.com).

Cholesterol: Cholesterol is fat that's circulating throughout the blood. We have a certain amount of fat in the blood that's OK. But if there's too much fat in the blood it's not healthy. So, when we check someone's cholesterol we check how much fat is there. If the fat levels are too high we say that someone has high cholesterol levels (gethealthyharlem.org).

Chronic Conditions: any ongoing or recurring health issue that has a significant impact on the lives of a person and/or their family, or other carriers (selfmanagement.health.wa.gov.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=42&Itemid=45).

Circadian Rhythm: are physical, mental and behavioral changes that follow a roughly 24-hour cycle, responding primarily to light and darkness in an organism's environment (nigms.nih.gov).

Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT): CBT is a form of treatment that focuses on examining the relationships between thoughts, feelings and behaviors (nami.com).

Depressed: a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest (mayoclinic.org).

Diabetes: People with diabetes have high levels of sugar in their blood. This is because their bodies have problems either making or using insulin. Insulin is a hormone that allows the sugar from food to be used by the body for energy (gethealthyharlem.org).

Diagnosis: when a doctor or healthcare professional tells you that you have a disease or condition that may need to be treated or managed by you or your doctor (gethealthyharlem.org).

Fatigue: a state of tiredness that involves decreased energy, motivation, and mental ability; different from drowsiness which is a feeling for a need to sleep (gethealthyharlem.org).

Hormone: chemicals released in one part of the body that travel through the bloodstream to send out messages to tissues or organs and control/balance how they do their work (gethealthyharlem.org).

Hypertension: Blood pressure is the measurement of how strong your blood pumps through your blood vessels. Hypertension happens when blood has a hard time getting through the blood vessels, usually because the vessels are narrow. It means that your heart has to work really hard to pump your blood through your vessels (gethealthyharlem.org).

Iron: Iron is a mineral that our bodies need for many functions. It helps our muscles store and use oxygen. Iron is also part of many other proteins and enzymes (nlm.nih.gov).

Irritable: abnormally sensitive to a stimulus (dictionary.com).

Melatonin: a hormone produced by the brain that regulates the body's sleep-wake cycle (gethealthyharlem.org).

Multiple Sleep Latency Test (MSLT): MSLT tests for excessive daytime sleepiness by measuring how quickly you fall asleep in a quiet environment during the day. Also known as a daytime nap study, the MSLT is the standard tool used to diagnose narcolepsy and idiopathic hypersomnia (sleepeducation.com).

Nicotine: an alkaloid (a nitrogen-containing chemical) made by the tobacco plant or produced synthetically. Nicotine has powerful pharmacologic effects including increased heart rate, heart stroke volume, and oxygen consumption by the heart muscle, as well as powerful psychodynamic effects such as euphoria, increased alertness, and a sense of relaxation. Nicotine is also powerfully addictive (medicinenet.com).

Non-Rapid Eye Movement Sleep: This is one of the two basic states of sleep and is notable for an absence of rapid eye movement (REM). It consists of three stages (N1, N2, and N3) of distinctly recognizable electrical brain wave patterns. It makes up the largest portion of the sleep cycle (sleepdisorders.about.com/od/glossary/g/NREM.htm)

Obesity: If a person is obese, it means they are extremely overweight. They are more likely to have health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and some cancers. A person is obese if they have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or greater (gethealthyharlem.org).

Obstructive Sleep Apnea: a potentially serious sleep disorder in which breathing repeatedly stops and starts during sleep (mayoclinic.org).

Orexin: Produced in an area of the brain called the hypothalamus, orexin is one of the chemical messengers (or neurotransmitters) that affect the brainstem and stimulate food intake, wakefulness and energy use (sleepdisorders.about.com/od/sleepglossarylo/g/Definition-Of-Orexin.htm).

Over Exertion: when the body is pushed beyond its ability to cope without hurting muscles or other areas of the body (medicaldictionary.net).

Paralyzed: when you can't use muscles in part of your body (gethealthyharlem.org).

Rapid Eye Movement (REM) Sleep: a stage of sleep characterized by quick, random movements of the eyes and paralysis of the muscles (medicalnewstoday.com).

Seizure Disorders: one of a great many medical conditions that are characterized by episodes of uncontrolled electrical activity in the brain (medicinenet.com).

Sleep Aids: an agent or a drug having a soothing, calming, or tranquilizing effect (freedictionary.com).

Sleep Disorders: Sleep disorders are changes in sleeping patterns or habits. Signs and symptoms of sleep disorders include excessive daytime sleepiness, irregular breathing or increased movement during sleep, difficulty sleeping, and abnormal sleep behaviors (mayoclinic.org).

Sleep evaluation: a clinical study or evaluation based on a thorough sleep history and detailed medical, substance, and psychiatric history (aasmnet.org/Resources/clinicalguidelines/040515.pdf).

Sleep Paralysis: a feeling of being conscious but unable to move. It occurs when a person passes between stages of wakefulness and sleep (webmd.com).

Stimulate: to excite a nerve to its functional activity (dictionary.com).

Online Sleep Health Resources

American Academy of Sleep Medicine (<https://aasm.org>)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov>)

American Sleep Apnea Association (<https://www.sleepapnea.org>)

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion—Healthy People 2020
(<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/sleep-health>)