



Charlotte, NC; January 12th, 2009:

United Sleep Medicine, P.A., (USM) is a Charlotte based national provider of sleep medicine services. USM is providing complete sleep monitoring services to the contestants on *NBC's The Biggest Loser: Couples*, which airs on Tuesday nights at 8pm on NBC. The USM team set up a 10 bed sleep diagnostic lab in Hollywood, CA and have continued to monitor and manage the clinical condition of the contestants with oversight provided by Dr. Hemanth Rao, President of USM.

USM's goal of entering into this partnership with *NBC's The Biggest Loser*, is to better understand the link between sleep disorders and morbid obesity. Dr. Rao believes "This is a unique opportunity to study the relationship between sleep disorders and other serious medical conditions found in morbid obese patients and the effect of weight loss on these issues. It will be very interesting to see if the contestants with treated sleep disorders are able to make or exceed the weight loss of contestants who did not have sleep issues. If so, it would provide further evidence that metabolic derangements associated with sleep disorders can be corrected in properly treated patients. Weight loss may then result from increased energy levels, elevation in basal metabolic rate and at the same time by reducing appetite." USM plans to use the data collected from this study to publish papers in medical journals and to give lectures across the country.

The Link between Obesity and Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) is a medical condition characterized by collapse of the upper airway musculature leading to snoring and cessation or significantly reduced airflow.

Gaining weight increases your risk for OSA. Men are twice as likely as women to have OSA.

The classic sleep apnea patient is a middle-age, overweight man with a large neck size. However, the incidence of apnea significantly rises in women as they become postmenopausal. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine reports that 80 to 90 percent of people with sleep apnea are unaware that they have the disorder.

Key warning signs for sleep apnea include:

Loud and frequent snoring

Choking or snorting sounds during sleep

Pauses in breathing during sleep

Daytime sleepiness

High blood pressure

Unexplained weight gain

Poorly controlled diabetes

Mood swings and irritability

Memory Loss

About United Sleep Medicine

United Sleep Medicine, a Charlotte based company, was founded in 1998. Our singular focus on patient care has allowed us to grow from a single sleep lab into a leading provider of sleep and neurophysiology services with a national presence. We have also received the highly acclaimed accreditation by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. USM currently owns and/or operates over 20 sleep labs nationwide. USM is also a leading provider of sleep medicine education, with the first A-STEP Accredited Sleep School in the Carolinas. To learn more about United Sleep Medicine and/or to schedule an appointment with a Sleep Specialist, please contact us at 704-377-5337 or go to our website at www.unitedsleepmedicine.com.