

## FULL-SERVICE LAB

The Sleep Disorder Center at Hamilton Medical Center is fully equipped to educate, diagnose and treat sleep disorders. A sleep study is useful in uncovering hidden health issues such as:

- Obstructive Sleep Apnea
- Narcolepsy
- Periodic Limb Movements
- Restless Legs Syndrome
- REM Behavior Disorder
- Sleepwalking and Other Disturbances

## HOW TO GET HELP

Your family physician can refer you for sleep testing or for a consultation with a sleep specialist that has training in sleep disorders medicine. This physician can diagnose sleep disorders as well as prescribe a treatment plan.

A sleep study is considered an outpatient procedure. Please check with your current insurance carrier for the specific coverage information. Hamilton Medical Center Sleep Disorders Center is available to assist you with any questions you or your insurance carrier may have. A separate charge is billed from the physician for diagnosis treatment and sleep study interpretation fees.

If you or someone you know suffers from a sleep-related disorder, please call the Sleep Disorder Center at **706-278-4757** for more information.

# RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME



**HAMILTON  
MEDICAL CENTER**

Sleep Disorders Center  
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“In the evening or at night, I feel a creepy-crawly, pulling sensation deep in my legs. I have to walk around or pound on my legs to make these feelings go away.”

### DO YOU HAVE RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME (RLS)?

1. Before I fall asleep, I develop an unpleasant or creepy, crawly sensation in my legs. (Sometimes, I get this same feeling in other parts of my body).
2. In order to relieve this sensation, I get up and walk, do deep knee bends, take a hot or cold bath, massage my legs, or perform some other activity.
3. I develop this unpleasant or creepy, crawly sensation when I sit for a period of time such as when watching television or a movie, riding in the car, attending the theater or my place of worship, or participation in a meeting.
4. The sensations bother me most in the evenings or at night.
5. No medical tests have revealed a cause for my sensations.
6. I have family members who experience these same sensations.
7. My bed partner tells me that I jerk my legs (or my arms) when I am asleep; sometimes, I have involuntary leg jerks when I am awake.
8. I often have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep.
9. I frequently feel tired or fatigued during the day.

If you are found to have RLS, you are not alone. Researchers estimate that up to 3% to 8% of the U.S. population has RLS. Many of these people may have a mild form of the disorder, which causes few, occasional, or less-severe everyday lives of tens of thousands of individuals.

### PRIMARY FEATURES OF RLS

Restless legs syndrome is a neurological disorder with four primary features. An adult with RLS will typically have all of these primary features.

- The bothersome, but usually not painful, sensations in the legs produce an irresistible urge to move. Some words used to describe these sensations include creeping, burning, itching, pulling, or tugging. (These sensations also occasionally occur in the arms.) Sharp, pins and needles, or numb are **NOT** usual descriptive terms.
- Symptoms are worse or exclusively present when the afflicted individual is at rest, and the sensations are typically lessened by voluntary movement of the affected extremity.
- Symptoms are worse in the evening and at night, especially when the individual lies down.
- Movements of the toes, feet, or legs (known as restlessness) are typically seen when the afflicted individual is sitting or lying down in the evening. This restlessness may be seen as “fidgetiness” or “nervousness.”

### DIAGNOSIS

Because RLS has such classic symptoms, the disorder is most often diagnosed on the basis of medical history. After ruling out other medical conditions as the cause of your symptoms, your healthcare provider can make the diagnosis of RLS by listening to your description of the sensations. Three symptoms are particularly noteworthy: an increase in the severity of the sensations while at rest, an inescapable urge to move the affected limbs, and relief of the symptoms upon movement of the affected limbs.

No laboratory test confirms your diagnosis of RLS; however, a thorough examination, including necessary laboratory tests, can reveal temporary disorders, such as iron deficiency, that may be associated with RLS. Some people (including those with PLMS and without the abnormal limbs sensations of RLS) will require an overnight testing of sleep to determine other causes of the sleep disturbance.