

Valley sleep doc: Five signs your child has poor rest

Banner Children's sleep expert shares often misunderstood signs



Dr. Walter Castro

MESA, Ariz. (Oct. 19, 2020) – As it turns out, many of us might have misunderstood certain health signs in our children for years.

For example, we often think of dark circles under a child's eyes as a symptom of poor sleep, but they might actually be part of a *cause* of sleep disturbances, according to [Walter Castro, MD](#), Banner Children's pediatric pulmonologist and sleep medicine specialist.

"Those dark circles can sometimes be 'allergic shiners' caused by allergies," Dr. Castro said. "Experts can determine this by examining the child's nose for inflammation. This is one of several misunderstood aspects of sleep-related issues in children that parents are often surprised to learn."

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To help in wading through the confusion of myths and facts, here are five signs your child isn't getting good sleep:

- **Morning headaches.** These can be a symptom of sleep apnea, caused by retention of carbon dioxide during sleep.
- **Hyperactivity.** While daytime sleepiness is an obvious sign of poor sleep, hyperactivity and a lack of impulse control can also result from a lack of good rest. Some signs commonly associated with ADHD may actually be sleep-related instead, though both issues can be connected.
- **Inattentiveness,** especially during the day. This can also lead to poor academic performance.
- **Audible breathing during sleep.** Breathing should be silent when resting, so any sounds from the mouth should be considered abnormal.
- **Restless, fragmented sleep.** Waking too much throughout the night or moving a lot during sleep can make it hard to get out of bed in the morning. (Not wanting to leave the bed is another sign a child's rest isn't helping them feel refreshed.)

The reasons for poor sleep are wide-ranging, of course, such as sleep apnea, ADHD, anxiety and more. The best way to properly diagnose and treat the issue is to consult a medical expert.

"Consulting a sleep expert can be especially helpful and thorough, because sleep medicine is the combination of four specialties: pulmonary (lungs), neurology (brain), psychiatry and psychology," said Dr. Castro, who treats patients at Banner Children's Specialists Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine Clinics in Mesa and Glendale.

About Banner Children's Banner Children's, part of nonprofit Banner Health, cares for more kids than any other health system in Arizona. From well-child exams to treatment of minor injuries and illnesses to management of chronic conditions, the experienced team at Banner Children's provides comprehensive, family-centered medical care for every child in Banner Health centers and clinics, emergency rooms, hospitals and outpatient facilities. Services include: behavioral health, cancer care, diabetes and endocrinology, digestive care, emergency care, heart care, neurosciences, primary care, surgery and more. For more information about Banner Children's services, physicians and locations, visit bannerchildrens.com.

For further information: media@bannerhealth.com

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