The Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine at Northwestern Medicine represents a new cross-disciplinary field that incorporates the time domain into the practice of medicine. Through this breakthrough Center, we have established the first Circadian Medicine Clinic in the US. We are excited and ready to apply the seminal advances in circadian and sleep basic research to the practice of medicine. As pioneers in this field, we have the great opportunity to help patients with sleep and circadian disorders that in turn can contribute to metabolic, cardiovascular, and neurological disorders.

Phyllis C. Zee, MD, PhD, Benjamin and Virginia T. Boshes Professor of Neurology and Director, Northwestern Medicine Sleep Disorders Center
Research that Leads to Innovation

At Northwestern, research conducted by our physicians and basic scientists has already contributed substantially to the discovery and characterization of molecular clocks, including their presence in nearly all cells of the body and their role in regulating the timing of expression of thousands of genes. We have established the links between circadian clocks and metabolic disease, sleep, and characterized clock disruptions in human disease. We are the recognized leader in the field.

Today, we continue to initiate novel research studies, including basic research, clinical trials, and technology development, that we believe will ultimately lead to improved health outcomes for our patients with circadian rhythm and sleep disorders. Our interdisciplinary teams are now capitalizing on seminal insights into how disturbed or inadequate sleep—independently or coupled with disturbed circadian timing—has been linked to an increased prevalence of disease and disorders including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, cancer, and mental illness.

In addition to laboratory investigations, Dr. Zee and Northwestern colleagues are measuring sleep and wake cycles and other circadian rhythms through questionnaires, polysomnography (used in the study of sleep) actigraphy (a method of monitoring human rest and activity cycles through wrist activity), and measurements of hormones and autonomic function.

Sleep Medicine Program

It is estimated that 50 to 70 million Americans suffer from a chronic sleep disorder. In some, insomnia, sleep apnea, and restless leg syndrome have been shown to lead to severe and life-long disabilities. As mentioned, scientific evidence continues to mount that shows disrupted sleep and/or circadian timing are associated with many mental and physical disorders such as depression, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.

Northwestern’s sleep medicine program within the Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine continues to be recognized as one of the top five academic sleep medicine programs in the nation. Through this program, we conduct approximately 3,000 sleep studies for patients and see more than 5,000 patients each year. Our regarded Sleep Medicine Program is central to the growth and success of our new Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine.

Education and Training

As part of a world-class academic medical center, we proudly educate and train the next generation of clinicians and researchers across a number of disciplines, including new areas of biomedicine, such as chronomedicine. These disciplines are truly innovative and at the cutting-edge. As part of our educational mission, our faculty members provide education and training at all levels—to medical students, residents, and fellows. Through our rigorous residency and fellowship programs, we are training both clinical and research specialists within the area of Circadian and Sleep Medicine. We are delighted to provide trainees with the rare and intellectually challenging experience of participating in the nation’s first academic center dedicated to circadian and sleep medicine.
NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE

Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine are seeking to impact the health of humankind through Northwestern Medicine. We aspire to be the destination of choice for people seeking quality healthcare; for those who provide, support, and advance that care through leading-edge treatments and breakthrough discoveries; and for people who share our passion for educating future physicians and scientists. Our commitment to transform healthcare and to be among the nation’s top academic medical centers will be accomplished through innovation and excellence.

Through the Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine within the Institute for Translational Neuroscience at Northwestern Medicine, we have an unprecedented opportunity to catapult our world-class work to find the links between sleep and circadian disorders and chronic diseases with the goal of improving current treatments. Better treatments will enhance the overall quality of life, performance, safety, and productivity of people everywhere who are grappling daily with debilitating sleep and circadian disorders.

We recognize that every positive contribution we have made to discovery, care, training, and outreach in the field of sleep medicine—and now chronomedicine—has been made possible by donors who have continued to entrust us with their philanthropic support. We invite interested friends to join us in propelling the compelling research and training efforts of our Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine through gifts of outright support and endowment.

THROUGH NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE, WE ARE CREATING A NATIONAL EPICENTER FOR HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, RESEARCH, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND ADVOCACY.

NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE