



NEWS RELEASE

## Christina Applegate and Merck Urge Insomnia Sufferers to Learn “Why They’re So Awake”

4/28/2016

Christina Applegate Shares Personal Struggle with Insomnia and Encourages Others to Educate Themselves about the Wake and Sleep Systems in the Brain

KENILWORTH, N.J. – Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, today announced it is teaming up with Emmy® Award-winning actress Christina Applegate to educate the millions of Americans struggling with insomnia. An insomnia sufferer for much of her adult life, Applegate is sharing her personal experience to inspire others to learn more about how to get the sleep they need.

“I’ve lived with insomnia for many years, but I’m making it a priority to address my sleep problems. I’m willing to experiment with different things to find a solution that works best for me, which is why I’m working with Merck, to help others struggling with insomnia learn more about what might be keeping them awake,” said Applegate. “If you have insomnia, it’s important to know you’re not alone, there are millions of people also struggling with their sleep. Talk about what you’re going through with others, including your doctor, and continue trying new things to help manage your insomnia.”

Applegate had talked to her doctor in the past, but only recently learned about the two systems in the brain that regulate sleep, and how a problem with the wake and sleep systems may contribute to insomnia. Now, she is encouraging others to visit [WhySoAwake.com](http://WhySoAwake.com) to get facts about insomnia and start a new dialogue with their health care providers about what might be keeping them awake.

The Role of the Sleep and Wake Systems in Insomnia



Scientific discoveries suggest that the brain has two systems – the wake and sleep systems. When the two systems function as they should, they complement each other, taking turns being in charge and sending signals at the right times. But that’s not always the case for some people. Science suggests that when insomnia occurs, your sleep signals may be telling your brain to sleep, but the wake signals in your brain may not be turning down like they should.

“Sleep is such an integral part of our overall health and wellness, yet millions of Americans continue to struggle with symptoms of insomnia,” said David Cloud, CEO of the National Sleep Foundation. “If you have insomnia, it’s important to educate yourself about the condition, so you’re better prepared to discuss your difficulties with sleep with your health care provider.”

In the United States, approximately 70 million people are affected by one or more symptoms of insomnia. Of these, an estimated 23.5 million people, roughly 10 percent of the adult population, experience symptoms consistent with the diagnosis of insomnia. Insomnia can affect people in a variety of ways, both physically and psychologically. It is important for people who are struggling with insomnia to speak with their health care provider about it to see what can be done.

“At Merck, we’re committed to helping patients struggling with sleep manage their insomnia, which includes developing resources to increase understanding about the condition,” said Eric Luthi, executive director and global brand leader, Insomnia marketing, Merck Global Human Health. “We are excited to work with Christina Applegate on *Why So Awake* and hope that through education, we can help inspire a meaningful dialogue between patients and health care providers about insomnia.”

To learn more about the brain’s sleep and wake system, and to assess your sleep habits, visit [www.WhySoAwake.com](http://www.WhySoAwake.com). You can also join the conversation on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

## About Christina Applegate

Christina Applegate has starred in several major television and film roles, including *Married with Children*, *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, *Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues* and *Vacation*. Her career achievements include a Primetime Emmy® Award for Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series, three additional Primetime Emmy® Award nominations, three Golden Globe® nominations and numerous other honors throughout her career. She also earned a Tony Award® nomination for her starring role in the Broadway revival of *Sweet Charity*.

## About Why So Awake

Why So Awake is an educational resource, developed by Merck, which aims to help consumers learn more about what might be happening in their brain when they're trying to sleep, and how the sleep and wake systems play a role in insomnia. Why So Awake features tools to help explain how certain behaviors may affect sleep and offers a customized doctor discussion guide designed to help patients renew conversations with their health care providers about insomnia, and what might really be keeping them awake. For more information, visit [WhySoAwake.com](http://WhySoAwake.com) and join the conversation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## About Merck

For 125 years, Merck has been a global health care leader working to help the world be well. Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information, visit [www.merck.com](http://www.merck.com) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

###

## CONTACTS

### Media Contact:

Megan Wilkinson

(267) 305-6463