

# PRESS RELEASE

## Symposium: Diagnostic Process to Assess Severity of SRBD

Date: 16 October 2008

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### Sleep apnea therapy has positive effect on diabetes and cardiac disease

**Kassel – It is estimated that one-third of all obese diabetics suffer from obstructive sleep apnea, the most frequently occurring type of Sleep-Related Breathing Disorder (SRBD). New study results clearly show that there is a causal relationship between sleep apnea and insulin resistance. Additional studies prove that the use of CPAP therapy in the treatment of diabetics with sleep apnea results in an improvement to their metabolic state.**

"Both ailments, sleep apnea and diabetes, occur together not only as a result of their frequency and their common risk factor of obesity," said Prof. Dr. Joachim Ficker (Nuremberg Hospital) at a scientific symposium in Kassel, sponsored by the medical technology company Weinmann. "There is much more evidence that sleep apnea is a risk factor for insulin resistance and therefore for the metabolic syndrome." Critical pathophysiological roles are played by the significantly increased activity of the sympathetic nervous system and the repeated oxygen desaturation during sleep, both of which are observed in sleep apnea.

#### **CPAP therapy has a positive effect on diabetes**

"Effective treatment of these patients with CPAP leads not only to a significant improvement in sleep latency and alertness during the day," Prof. Ficker added, "but in patients with severe obstructive sleep apnea, consistently applied CPAP therapy can also make it easier to maintain a good blood glucose level."

#### **24-hour ECG gains new relevance**

It has long been known that patients with sleep-related breathing disorders have an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and are predisposed to nighttime arrhythmia. The occurrence of bradyarrhythmia (slow heart rate) is episodic. Apparently this response is triggered by parasympathetic reflexes and is considered to be apnea-induced. Ventricular tachyarrhythmia (fast heart rate) arises as a result of recurring oxygen desaturation in cases of sleep-related breathing disorders. There are other frequent associations between obstructive sleep apnea and atrial fibrillation. "The risk of developing complex arrhythmia from sleep-related breathing disorders is increased by a factor of two to four," said Dr. Dr. Mathias Rauchhaus from Charité (Berlin). For this reason, classic diagnostic methods like the 24-hour ECG are acquiring new relevance in connection with sleep-related breathing disorders.

"In cases of atrial fibrillation and arrhythmia of unknown origin, the patient should be examined for evidence of sleep-related breathing disorders and, if necessary, treated with appropriate therapy means," Rauchhaus added.

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### **Background: Weinmann**

Weinmann Geräte für Medizin GmbH + Co. KG concentrates on its product lines Homecare, Emergency and Diagnostics. In these areas the Hamburg-based family business offers diagnostic, therapeutic and also life-saving devices and system solutions of the highest quality. Today it is in the hands of the Griefahn and Feldhahn families and its headquarters have been located in Hamburg-Stellingen since 1977.

Today the company has about 500 employees. With more than 100 patent families and 90 trademarks, Weinmann is among the leading providers of medical devices for home care, diagnostics and emergency medicine in Germany. Sales in 2007 were 65.5 million Euros. Weinmann does business in more than 50 countries and operates branch offices in France, Switzerland, Thailand, China, Russia, Australia and New Zealand.

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