

DO YOU KNOW YOUR SLEEP A – to – Zzzzzzzz's?



2020 Leader's guide and Member handout

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Educational Goals:

- To educate people on importance of a good night's sleep.
- To help people identify symptoms of a sleep disorder.
- To encourage people to talk to their health professional about signs and symptoms they feel might be related to a sleep disorder.

Community Action:

- Booth and/or posters about sleep
- Distribute information about sleep disorder symptoms, etc.
- Newspaper article on sleep and sleep disorders

Sleep is essential to our health and wellbeing. We spend up to one-third of our lives asleep. During sleep, our bodies heal, rest, repair, de-stress and bolster our immune systems. Your brain sorts and files your thoughts and experiences from the past day, giving us a fresh perspective that enables us to problem solve. Sleep helps keep our emotions on a level plane and allows us to deal with stressful situations.

Most of us know that getting a good night's sleep is important, but too few of us actually make those eight or so hours between the sheets a priority. For many of us with sleep debt, we've forgotten what "Being really, truly rested" feels like.

To further complicate matters, stimulants like coffee and energy drinks, alarm clocks, and external lights – including those from electronic devices – interfere with our natural sleep/wake cycle.

To get the sleep you need, you must look at the big picture.

How Much Sleep Do We Really Need:

The amount of sleep a person needs depends on many factors, including age. In general:

- Infants (ages 0-3 months) require 14-17 hours a day
- Pre-school children (ages 3-5) require 10-13 hours a day
- School-age children (ages 6-13) require 9-11 hours a day
- Teenagers (age 14-17) need about 8-10 hours each day
- Adults (ages 18-64) need 7-9 hours a night for the best amount of sleep, although some people may need as few as 6 hours or as many as 10 hours of sleep each day.
- Older adults (ages 65 and older) need 7-8 hours of sleep each day.



The amount of sleep a person needs also increases if he or she has been deprived of sleep in previous days. Getting too little sleep creates a “sleep debt”, which is much like being overdrawn at a bank. Eventually, your body will demand that the debt be repaid.

What Can You Do To Achieve Better Sleep?

1. In the bedroom
 - a. Remove clutter
 - b. The color of your bedroom can affect the quality of your sleep. Soft blue, gray or green are soothing muted color suggestions
 - c. Remove all electronics – TV, cell phones, computers and game machines
 - d. Keep room dark, quiet and comfortable. The ideal night time temperature for a bedroom is 68°
2. Avoid caffeine 6 to 8 hours before bedtime. This includes chocolate!
3. Make bedtime a habit. Go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends.
4. One-half hour before bedtime, do something relaxing. Research shows that reading can reduce stress by 68%, more than other traditional methods of relaxation.
5. Avoid alcohol a few hours before bedtime.
6. If you can't fall asleep in 20 minutes, get up. Try a quiet activity (reading, knitting) and do not return to bed until you're tired. Remember to get up at your normal time.
7. Lastly, don't worry about not sleeping! Sleep will happen eventually, and freaking out about it only makes the problem worse.

Doctors recommend trying a combination of these ideas over a period of time to find a perfect bag of tricks that works for each person.

Sleep Disorders:

Sleep disorders are changes in the way that you sleep.

A sleep disorder can affect your overall health, safety and quality of life. Sleep deprivation can affect your ability to drive safely and increase your risk of other health problems.

Some of the signs and symptoms of sleep disorders include excessive daytime sleepiness, irregular breathing or increased movement during sleep, and difficulty falling asleep.

Approximately 70 million Americans suffer from a sleep disorder, and while there are over 80 recognized sleep disorders, some are much more prevalent than others. Here are the four most common disorders that could be robbing you of quality sleep.

Insomnia

Insomnia is by far the most common sleep disorder with approximately half of all people having experienced symptoms occasionally, and about 10% of Americans reporting suffering from chronic insomnia (happening at least three nights a week for a month or longer). People with insomnia have one or more of the following symptoms:

- Difficulty going to sleep at night
- Waking often in the middle of the night with trouble returning to sleep
- Waking earlier in the morning than planned or desired



Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is a potentially serious sleep disorder that occurs when a person's breathing is interrupted during sleep. People with untreated sleep apnea stop breathing repeatedly during their sleep.

There are two types of sleep apnea: obstructive and central.

- Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is the second most prevalent sleep disorder affecting roughly 20 million Americans. It is caused by a blockage of the airway, usually when the soft tissue in the back of the throat collapses during sleep. Symptoms include snoring, daytime sleepiness, fatigue, restlessness during sleep, gasping for air while sleeping, and trouble concentrating.
- In central sleep apnea (CSA), the brain fails to tell the body to breathe. This type is related to the function of the central nervous system. People with CSA may gasp for air but mostly report recurrent awakenings during night.

Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)

RLS affects approximately 10% of adults. It is a neurological disorder characterized by a persistent, sometimes overwhelming need to move one's legs usually while resting. Sensations in the legs are often described as creeping, pulling, aching, itching, burning, and throbbing and the only relief is temporary movement or massaging of the legs.

Narcolepsy

This is a neurological disorder characterized by the brain's inability to control its sleep/wakefulness cycle. People with narcolepsy suffer from chronic daytime sleepiness and episodes in which they fall asleep unexpectedly during the day. Narcolepsy usually begins

between the ages of 15 and 25, but it can become apparent at any age. In many cases, narcolepsy is undiagnosed and, therefore, untreated.

How are sleep disorders diagnosed?

If you suspect that you may have a sleep disorder, discuss your symptoms with your primary health care provider. There are many ways to help diagnose sleep disorders. Primary care providers can usually treat most sleep disorders effectively once they're correctly diagnosed. He/she can perform a physical exam and help you identify the difficulties you are having with sleep. Keeping a sleep diary for two weeks may be helpful to your primary care provider. Some illnesses can cause disturbed sleep, so your primary health care provider may order tests to rule out other conditions.

If your primary care provider suspects that you have a sleep disorder, he/she may suggest that you undergo a sleep study. You may be offered the options of a home sleep test or an in-lab sleep study.

If you choose a home sleep test, your health care provider will send the order to Instant Diagnostic Systems (IDS) who will contact you ASAP to ship the device to your home. The device is delivered right to your door with complete instructions. There is nothing like the comfort of your own bed; many people find it difficult to sleep in a lab setting with someone watching from the next room. It is also convenient since you do not need to drive to the test site or miss work. It is cost-effective, being considerably less than an in-lab sleep test.

An in-lab sleep study patient spends the night in a supervised sleep lab. A series of electrodes are placed on the head, chest and face before going to bed. During the night, body functions such as oxygen levels, heart rate, brain and muscle activity and eye movement are monitored. A camera also records movement during sleep. The next morning, the patient goes home and the results are analyzed. Once diagnosed the appropriate treatment option can be prescribed by your health care provider.

To begin a new path towards healthier sleep and a healthier lifestyle, start by assessing your own individual needs and habits. Pay careful attention to your mood, energy and health after a poor night's sleep versus a good one. Like good diet and exercise, sleep is a critical component to overall health.



*“Laugh and the world laughs with you;
Snore and you sleep alone.”*

--Author Unknown

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