

## The Power of Sleep

According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, healthy sleep means for most adults getting 7+ hours each night, not waking up frequently, having a consistent sleep schedule, and waking up refreshed.

## Benefits of Sleep

- Decreased risk of weight gain and obesity, due to the effect of sleep and on hunger-regulating hormones
- Decreased risk of heart disease and other cardiovascular problems
- Improved mental sharpness and feelings of happiness, allowing you to be more productive with a positive outlook
- Improved immune function and white blood cell count, which allows your body to naturally fight off infections
- Improved ability to recover from physically demanding tasks and exercise



## Symptoms of Sleep Disorders

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Excessive sleepiness during the day  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Snoring or episodes of stopped breathing during sleep, known as sleep apnea                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Urge to move your legs at rest or an uncomfortable feeling in the legs at night                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | A chronic persistence of feeling sleepy and involuntary episodes of falling asleep without warning |

Talk with your Primary Care Physician (PCP) if you answered 'Yes' to one or more of these symptoms.

## Outcomes of Sleep Deprivation

- Disrupts hormones that control hunger and appetite, causing you to increase food intake, increase cravings, and gain weight.
- Put you at a higher risk for heart disease, heart attack, stroke, and high blood pressure
- Has been linked to cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease, and other forms of dementia
- Elevated levels of cortisol, a stress hormone that leads to increased stress and anxiety
- Can impair judgement, increase impulsivity, making it hard to stay consistent with habit changes



## Healthy Sleep Tips

- Stick to a sleep schedule: Try to be as consistent as possible with your sleep and wake up times each day.
- Create sleep rituals: Creating a bedtime routine will prepare your mind and body for sleep.
- Exercise: Exercise is a great way to improve the quality of your sleep. Find a time to exercise that works best for you, some individuals need to avoid exercise 3-5 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid eating 3 hours before bedtime: Eating close to bedtime raises cortisol and insulin, interferes with good quality sleep and prevents fat burning overnight.
- Avoid alcohol before bed: Alcohol might help you relax and fall asleep, but it interferes with your ability to get into the deeper stages of sleep.
- Avoid caffeine and nicotine: The stimulating effects of caffeine and nicotine can take as long as 8 hours to wear off fully. Avoid caffeine after 12 pm.
- Avoid screens for one hour before bed: Screens have been shown to stimulate your brain and prevent good quality sleep.
- Keep your room cold and dark: Remember that we are meant to sleep in a cool, dark cave! Our bodies need to cool before they can fall asleep and light tricks the brain into thinking it is time to be awake.

## Sleep Ritual Suggestions

- Read a book. Avoid reading from a device as it can suppress the release of melatonin, a hormone needed for sleep.
- Try journaling, deep breathing or meditation.
- Use a white noise machine or fan to block out unwanted sounds.
- Take a warm bath or shower.
- Install light-blocking curtains or shades.
- Stretch it out. A night time light stretching routine can ease the body into restful sleep.
- Use a diffuser and fill it with relaxing essential oils such as lavender or sandalwood.

