



The Beginning of Health is Sleep – Irish Proverb

Human life is dependent on sleep. While all of the details aren't known about what happens during sleep and why it is necessary, it is clear that without it, humans function poorly and suffer health consequences. That is why sleep deprivation has been used as a form of torture for ages. Proper sleep is known to be important for growth stimulation, recuperation, proper immune system response, development of the brain, learning, memory and information processing. Quality of sleep is as crucial as quantity. As we sleep, our brain goes through certain necessary cycles that make sleep effective. If our sleep is interrupted too much, even 8 hours may not provide us with the benefits of sleep.

In an experiment on sleep deprivation, the rats in the experiment died after about 14 days without sleep.

DID YOU KNOW?

A study showed that people who are awake for 19 hours scored much worse than those who were considered legally drunk (.08 blood alcohol level).

A 2001 National Sleep Foundation Sleep in America survey found that:

- ~ 62% of surveyed adults get less than 8 hours sleep nightly
- ~ 31% get less than 7 hours sleep nightly
- ~ 40% have trouble staying awake during the day
- ~ 8 out of 10 say they would sleep more if they knew it would improve their health and memory (Editorial comment: Guess what? It would improve your health and memory, so get more sleep!)
- ~ Over the last 5 years, people in the US have worked more and slept less

SLEEP DEPRIVATION

You cannot really “cheat” on the amount of sleep you get. Sleep experts say that when we don't get adequate sleep, we accumulate a sleep debt that can be difficult to “pay back” if it becomes too big. The resulting sleep deprivation has been linked to health problems such as obesity, high blood pressure and Type II diabetes, negative mood and behavior, decreased productivity and safety issues in the home, on the job and on the road.

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In Sleep We Are All Equal – Spanish Proverb

Recommended Daily Amounts of Sleep

Newborns: 14 – 18 hours

Infants: 13 – 14 hours

Toddlers: 12 – 14 hours

Pre-schoolers: 11 – 12 hours

Elementary schoolers: 9 – 11 hours

Teens: 8.5 – 9.5 hours

Adults: 7 – 9 hours

Elderly: 7 – 9 hours

If they don't get enough sleep, children, teens and adults all suffer from the following:

~ irritability

~ low frustration tolerance

~ slow processing of logic

~ difficulty with memory skills

~ short attention span

~ difficulty staying on task

~ slower reaction times

Disease and Sleep Keep Far Apart – Welsh Proverb



Both quality and quantity of sleep are important. If you aren't getting the best of either, **ask us** for a copy of our **“Sleep Hygiene – Tips for Better Sleep”** handout!