

# ***Monthly Wellness Update***

*Courtesy of  
Advanced Rehabilitation Clinics, Inc  
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*November 2004*

**No Proper Sleep...No Health and Wellness...**

**Know Proper Sleep...Know Health and Wellness...**

**Are you in the know when it comes to sleep?**

Without adequate restful sleep, optimal health and wellness cannot be achieved. Yet, the fact remains that most people do not get the sleep they need. Perhaps even more troubling, according to the National Sleep Foundation, most people are not aware how sleepy they actually are, or how much their lack of good sleep impairs their daily functioning.

The Mayo Clinic reports that more than 100 million people in the United States don't get a good nights sleep on a regular basis. In addition, 33 million Americans have occasional sleepless nights. Sleeping well is not a luxury, it is a necessity.

A study by the American Sleep Apnea Association and Stanford University Sleep Disorders Clinic and Research Center found that inadequate sleep causes problems similar to drinking too much alcohol. When a tired driver takes the wheel, the results can be disastrous. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that drowsy driving causes at least 100,000 highway crashes each year in the United States alone-40, 000 result in injuries and 1,550 are fatal.

Lack of proper sleep also affects our work. Just over half of the American workforce (51%) reports that sleepiness on the job interferes with the amount of work they get done. Nearly one out of four adults (24%) has difficulty getting up for work two or more workdays per week. Nearly one out of four adults (19%) reports making occasional to frequent work errors due to sleepiness.

Finally, nearly 2/3 of American adults say they experience a sleep problem a few nights per week or more, and that this sleepiness interferes with their concentration and makes handling stress on the job more difficult.

**So.... What can you do to improve the quality of your sleep????**

The following tips could help you achieve restful sleep. It is not necessary to do all of these to sleep better. Try a few at a time and see how you respond.

**1. Do you go to sleep and awaken at regular times?**

The human body likes a routine. It is easier to fall asleep and wake up when you stick to a regular schedule.

**2. Keep the room cool, quiet, and dark.**

Your bedroom should be cool, but not cold, definitely not warm or hot. Silence is more conducive to sleep. Soothing background or “white” noise from a fan, air purifier, or humidifier will help to mask disturbing noises from both within or outside of the house. A dark room helps to ensure deeper sleep. Too much light can make you a light sleeper. Dark window shades, or a sleep mask are helpful.

**3. Avoid late dinners and alcohol.**

Try to eat at least 2 1/2 hours before going to bed. A light snack however, can help induce sleep. Alcohol, on the other hand, dehydrates the body, interfering with sleep. Drink at least one glass of water for each drink you imbibe.

**4. Exercise regularly.**

Physical activity relaxes the muscles, improves blood flow, and promotes deep (or delta) sleep. Exercise is also nature’s most powerful antidepressant.

**5. Is your bed clean and comfortable?**

A clean, comfortable, inviting bed is one of life’s great joys. Wash your sheets regularly (weekly) and make sure your bed is a high quality piece of furniture that you can be proud of. You’re going to spend 1/3 of your life there, don’t go cheap.

**6. Avoid caffeine and sleeping pills.**

If you experience difficulty falling asleep, avoid caffeine after 6 pm each night. Not only will caffeine keep you awake, it also dehydrates the body like alcohol does. Prescription sleep aides uniformly cause deterioration in the quality of sleep by reducing sleep and promoting light, dreamless sleep. If insomnia is a problem, consult a sleep specialist, and ask them about melatonin as a safe alternative. Melatonin helps to strengthen the body’s cue to initiate sleep.

**7. Do you wake up with low back or neck pain?**

If your bed is causing low back discomfort it may be time for a new bed. Your mattress and pillow should support the natural curves of your spine when you sleep on your back or side. If your mattress is saggy, replace it. A “cervical” pillow that supports the natural curve of the neck will relieve strain on the neck during sleep. Avoid sleeping on your stomach as it tends to cause added strain to both the low back (increased arch) and neck (the head is twisted to one side or the other).

If you have a persistent problem with low back, shoulder, or neck pain when sleeping, consult with one of our licensed physical therapy wellness consultants for a complimentary assessment of your condition. The advice is free, the price you pay for poor quality of sleep is quite high.

Call today for an appointment to have a complimentary pain/injury assessment with a licensed physical therapist at Advanced Rehabilitation Clinics. Main Office 630-832-6919.