

The Importance of Sleep

Getting a healthy, comfortable, refreshing night's sleep is as vital as breathing fresh air. You need a full night's sleep if you want to function at your very best.

Here are just a few reasons why sleep is so very important:

- Sleep restores the brain and body – adequate sleep increases concentration and reaction times among other things.
- Certain hormones are produced more during sleep. Too little sleep can lead to weight gain by altering hormone levels that regulate hunger leading to overeating, increased weight and obesity.
- In children, growth hormones are secreted during sleep, insufficient sleep is also associated with behavioral problems including ADHD as well as other issues.
- Sleep improves memory consolidation taking what we learn and making it more coherent and accessible when needed.

Factors that contribute to insomnia, whether transient, short term or chronic, include negative stress and anxiety. However, even such seemingly innocuous factors such as noise or light, even your mattress or pillow—can cause sleep problems. Using alcohol or caffeine, smoking, napping during the day or eating late at night can affect your rest as well. Additionally anything from pain to hormone shifts to involuntary movements such as “restless leg syndrome” are linked to sleep disturbances.

Sleep is a critical component to wellness and can be affected by many causes and activities. However, it is very clear that the nervous system and its relationship to the mind/body connection are a major influence in this area. One thing is for sure, your sleep is important to your well being and you need to take an action step!

Action Step:

We recommend the inclusion of Chiropractic care as a regular part of your lifestyle, meditation, calming teas and herbs. We suggest you try these approaches first, but if you do not regain your natural sleep pattern quickly, we advise you to consult with your health professional because there is no single answer to each person's needs.

To ignore the problem is to ignore your ability to create wellness. If you are unsure of your sleep patterns but suspect you have a problem, keep a diary for 10 days (what you eat, how you move, what you're thinking/feeling) and bring this record to your health professional as well. We've had great success helping people to sleep better!

Do you know how well you are? We can help you reach your goals with Creating Wellness! The absence of illness or discomfort does not necessarily mean we are healthy and well. A Creating Wellness assessment can help identify the areas of your life that, if improved, will allow you to live life with vitality and energy! Ask us about how you can create more wellness in your life!

Portions of this week's wellness tip were provided by Petra Kolber of the Creating Wellness team.

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