

GOOD THINGS TO KNOW

A Decade of News You Can Use!

*Terese Miller, ACE Gold Certified Instructor, ACSM & IDEA Member 310.859.9908
terese.miller@sbcglobal.net © Terese Miller 2012*

NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION'S SLEEP HYGIENE RECOMMENDATIONS

GO TO BED AT THE SAME TIME EACH NIGHT & RISE AT THE SAME TIME EACH DAY

MAKE YOUR BEDROOM A QUIET, DARK, RELAXING ENVIRONMENT, NEITHER TOO HOT OR TOO COLD

MAKE SURE YOUR BED IS COMFORTABLE AND USE IT ONLY FOR SLEEPING; NO READING, WATCHING TV, OR LISTENING TO MUSIC

REMOVE ALL TVs, COMPUTERS AND OTHER "GADGETS" FROM THE BEDROOM

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MAY PROMOTE SLEEP, BUT NOT WITHIN A FEW HOURS OF BEDTIME

AVOID LARGE MEALS BEFORE BEDTIME (1)

NOVEMBER 4 - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS!!!



At last, I get my hour back, so do you. Each spring I wail about how the loss affects my circadian rhythms, depriving me of valuable sleep; simultaneously ignoring them by eating late and sending midnight emails. Economy-related stress is to blame. To stay in the game, I've got to be highly informed plus deliver better, same-day, customer service.

However, after hearing Dr. Hans Gruenn's <http://www.drgruenn.com/> lectures on stress, the immune system, and sleep, I'm about to change my night owl ways. "Per day, infants need 15-16 hours of sleep, toddlers: 12-14 hours, tweens: 10-11 hours, teens: 8-9 hours and adults 7-8 hours." More: <http://www.webmd.com/parenting/guide/sleep-children>

CIRCADIAN RHYTHMS DO MATTER

"Circadian rhythms are physical, mental and behavioral changes that follow a roughly 24-hour cycle, responding primarily to light and darkness in an organism's environment. They are found in most living things, including animals, plants and many tiny microbes. The study of circadian rhythms is called chronobiology." More: http://www.nigms.nih.gov/Education/Factsheet_CircadianRhythms.htm

"For one million years, the human species lived with bright light in daytime and darkness at night. Our circadian rhythms adapted accordingly: nighttime darkness triggered a surge of melatonin leading to sleep. <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/melatonin-and-sleep> And dawn triggered awakening. But for the past 100 years, humans in developed nations have been illuminating their evenings with electric light. At first sleep physiologists assumed that such evening light would not affect circadian rhythms, since the amount of light is so much less than sunlight. But Harvard studies have shown the assumption to be wrong; our artificially illuminated evenings are disrupting our sleep and (although this is less clear) may be producing sleep pathology in some of us." (2)

GET YOUR Z's BECAUSE

anyone, not just circadian rhythm-interrupted, shift workers, can suffer from "sleep-related issues, such as, obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure" (3), not to mention cognitive decline and becoming at risk for heart disease, stroke and kidney failure.

TO GET MORE SLEEP,

see the National Sleep Foundation sidebar. In addition, don't use "alcohol as a sleeping pill (it suppresses rapid eye movement, or REM cycle of your sleep that affects learning) and leaves you awake later in the night." (2)

"Make sleep a priority. Deal with worries and distractions several hours before bedtime. Make a 'to-do' list to let go of some of your worries. Add nicotine to the 'avoid list' in the late afternoon [then permanently!]. Develop a sleep ritual. Avoid napping unless you're sleep deprived. Use earplugs, an electric fan or a 'white-noise' machine to block out sounds, if needed. If your pets disturb you during the night, put them out of the room. Take a warm bath prior to bed and try some lavender or chamomile aromatherapy products." (3)

SEEK MEDICAL HELP FOR SLEEP DISORDERS like snoring, sleep apnea, insomnia, sleep deprivation, restless legs syndrome or chronic pain to protect your health.

<http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/default.htm>

MATRESS & PILLOW SELECTION

"Since the average person spends about a third of his/her life sleeping, bed posture is as important as standing or sitting posture. Your sleeping position, bed, and use of pillows, all determine your bed posture." More: <http://ergonomics.ucla.edu/homepage/back-safety/sleeping-posture.html>

(1)

http://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about/sleep/sleep_hygiene.htm

(2) *You Will Start to Feel Very Sleepy* by Robert A. Stickgold, John W. Winkelman, Peter Wehrwein, & Josh Ulick Newsweek, January 19, 2004

(3) *Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep*, IDEA Health & Fitness Source, April 2004