



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at Connor & Gallagher OneSource



THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Did you know that 1 in 3 American adults don't get the recommended seven hours of sleep? While this might not seem problematic, consistently failing to get enough sleep can put you at risk of significant health problems. In fact, not getting enough sleep is linked to a variety of chronic conditions like Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, depression and obesity. Moreover, failing to regularly get enough sleep can lead to chronic fatigue, which can increase the risk of productivity issues at work and distracted driving crashes.

How Much Sleep Is Enough?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults ages 18 and older should get seven hours or more of sleep per night. The CDC also stresses that all sleep isn't created equal, and that good sleep quality is essential to your health and well-being.

To determine your sleep quality, evaluate if you're waking up multiple times throughout the night, if you wake up feeling unrested (even if you slept for seven hours) or if you experience breathing problems while you're sleeping. While your sleep quality may be improved by implementing better sleep habits, symptoms of poor sleep quality may be attributed to a sleep disorder that you should see your doctor for to discuss treatment options.

Benefits of Getting Enough Sleep

Sleep is essential for maintaining a healthy, productive and low-stress lifestyle. Here are just a few benefits of getting a good night's sleep:

- **Increased productivity and work performance**—Giving your body enough time to go through all the sleep stages is necessary for energy, muscle repair, improved memory, and the release or regulation of important hormones that are essential for everyday functions within the body.
- **Decreased weight gain**—According to the National Sleep Foundation, not allowing your body enough time for rest and regulation can lead to an increased appetite. The particular hormones that give you the feeling of being full or hungry can become irregular, which may cause increased feelings of hunger that lead to weight gain.
- **Improved mental health**—Getting enough sleep can help alleviate feelings of fatigue that may contribute to stress, depression and anxiety. Symptoms of fatigue can be drowsiness, loss of energy and even mood swings.

Tips for Improving Your Sleep Habits

If you're experiencing trouble getting enough sleep every night, the following five tips may help you get



a better night's sleep:

1. **Eat nutritiously.** Good eating habits can help you sleep better and feel energized all day. Also, avoid big meals right before going to bed.
2. **Exercise regularly.** This also helps your sleep quality and daytime energy level. Just be sure to avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime.
3. **Avoid stimulants like caffeine before bed.** Stimulants like caffeine and nicotine promote alertness, which can make it difficult for you to fall and stay asleep, so it's important to avoid them for three to four hours before bed.
4. **Stick to a schedule, even on the weekends.** Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day to keep your body on a consistent schedule.
5. **Put the electronics away.** Blue-light emitting electronic devices can prohibit you from getting a good night's sleep. To reduce the effects of these sleep-stealing devices, refrain from using them for at least an hour before bed.

For More Information

Getting at least seven hours of sleep every night will help keep costly chronic conditions at bay and combat fatigue. For more information on how to improve your sleep habits or to address sleep issues, contact your doctor today.