GBS Health & Wellness

Getting Sufficient Sleep During COVID-19

Did You Know This About Sleep?

- strengthens the immune system
- enhances memory, concentration and decision-making skills
- helps regulate hormones like cortisol (stress hormone) and ghrelin (hunger hormone)
- improves mood and overall mental health

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Sleep may be viewed as a luxury during difficult times, but in reality, it is a necessity. Check out our Rise & Shine flyer to learn more about the importance of getting quality sleep, the stages of sleep, and insight on the art of napping.

Here are a few additional tips:

- **Stick to a Schedule** - Maintain a consistent wake-up time and bedtime (as much as possible), regardless of the day of the week. By doing so, the body can acclimate to the sleep schedule, which will help in falling asleep and waking up more easily each day. In addition, resist the urge to oversleep. It may be tempting to sleep more than 9 hours a night, but this can result in feeling unfocused, groggy and agitated the next day.
- **Prioritize Physical Activity** - Exercising for even 10 minutes a day can promote a good night's sleep. Make it a goal to move every day - participate in activities you enjoy! Keep in mind, vigorous exercise too close to bed can negatively impact sleep quality, so it may be best to avoid intense exercise within two hours of bed.
- **Natural Light is a Necessity** - Exposure to natural light is essential for the body's internal clock, which helps regulate sleep and wake patterns. With spring bringing longer days, spend time outside (especially in the mornings) to get some fresh air and reap the many benefits of natural light. Want to learn more? Check out our flyer on Sunlight and Serotonin.
- **Be Sure to Unplug** - There may be a need, now more than ever, to use technology throughout the day for work, school, entertainment and staying in touch with loved ones. Extra screen time, especially close to bed, can delay the release of melatonin, which makes it more difficult to fall asleep. Be mindful of screen time and try to turn off technology at least 30 minutes before bed.
- **Food for Thought** - When it comes to food, there are certain options that can help or hinder quality sleep. To avoid sleep interference, limit caffeine after 2:00pm and avoid alcohol within 4 hours of bed. For better quality sleep, try one of these 12 Snacks to Support Sleep.
- **Create a Relaxation Routine** - Take time to unwind from the day by incorporating relaxation techniques into a nightly routine. Try different activities like taking a hot bath or shower, light stretching, listening to calming music or meditation. One great place to start is by practicing deep breathing. Put it to the test with this Belly Breathing technique that can immediately reduce stress and slow the heart rate!