

Sleep Awareness Week

Did you know that you spend at least a third of your life sleeping? Sleep is so important for maintaining your health, but unfortunately, many people suffer from sleep disorders, such as sleep apnea, insomnia, restless leg syndrome, and narcolepsy. Not only is amount of sleep important, but quality of sleep is also important for your health. With Day Light Saving just around the corner, it is important to prepare yourself for the loss of an hour, by making sure you are still getting the proper amount of sleep. Sleep Awareness week works to bring awareness to the issues of not getting enough sleep. If you think you are suffering from a sleep disorder, speak with your doctor.

Sleep Disorders

Around 50-70 million Americans suffer from a sleep disorder and about 1 in 3 aren't getting the proper amount of uninterrupted sleep. The amount of sleep recommended varies on age and is completely dependent on each individual, however, the NIH suggests infants aged 4-12 months need 12-16 hours a day including naps, children 1-2 need 11-14 hours a day including naps, children 3-5 need 10-13 hours including naps, children aged 6-12 need 9-12 hours, teens aged 13-18 need 8-10 hours, and adults aged 18 and older need 7-8 hours. Other studies suggest adults need 7-9 hours of sleep. When you don't get the proper amount of sleep, you create what is known as a sleep debt, which is the amount of sleep you need to recover. This can build up overtime, so even if you aren't getting enough sleep during the week due to work or other duties, the weekend might not be enough to recover the amount of sleep your body needs. Sleep disorders include sleep apnea (when your breathing is labored or stops and your body forces you to wake up and catch your breath), insomnia (when you have a difficult time going to sleep or staying asleep), restless leg syndrome (when your body moves during sleep, often your legs, making it difficult to fall asleep or stay asleep), and narcolepsy (drowsiness or tiredness during the day, making it difficult to stay awake when you need to be). There are many reasons for being affected by sleep disorders, such as work schedule, lifestyle choices like taking medications to stay awake or drug and alcohol abuse, undiagnosed or untreated medical problems including stress or anxiety, or having medical conditions or taking medications that interrupt sleep patterns.

Benefits of Sleep

Sleep is an important function for our bodies to survive, similarly to eating and drinking water. Sleep is important for storing memories in the brain, nerve cells communicate while you sleep, and sleep is suggested to remove toxins from the brain that build up during the day while you are awake. When you don't get enough sleep, research has shown that there is an increase in risk for other disorders and health issues, such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, obesity, and even cancer.

Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

Try to keep to a regular sleep schedule, even on the weekends. Set a time to wake up and go to bed and try to stick to it. Exercising is important, but try not to exercise a few hours before going to bed. Avoid nicotine and caffeine up to four hours before bed and try not to drink alcohol before sleeping. Keep your bedroom as your bedroom – avoid having a computer, watching tv, or doing work in your room. Keep it at a comfortable temperature and make sure to eliminate bright lights when going to sleep. If you are unable to fall asleep for 20 minutes, it is recommended you leave your room and focus on something

else until you are tired. For more tips, talk to your doctor. They will know and have the best recommendations for you to get a good night's sleep.

Community Care Physicians

If you think you might be suffering from a sleeping disorder or just generally not getting enough sleep, speak with your doctor. They can help target the reason behind your sleep issues and refer you to the best solution. If you are in need of a primary care physician, Community Care Physician's Concierge Care Coordinator would be more than happy to direct you to the best one for you. Call (518) 782-3800.

Tech Valley Sleep Center

Community Care Physician's is proud to have our Tech Valley Sleep Center, which is accredited by the Academy of Sleep Medicine. The goal of the Tech Valley Sleep Center is for you to enjoy healthier sleep. Tech Valley Sleep Center offers a full-service, state-of-the-art facility dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of sleep disorders. They offer overnight testing in comfortable, private patient rooms, all using the latest digital equipment. For more information, visit their website [here](#).

Sources

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