Sleeping Well Despite a Global Pandemic
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Agenda

✓ COVID-19 and sleep
✓ Importance of sleep
✓ Science of sleep
✓ Modifiable behaviors for optimal sleep – daytime, evening, and general sleep rules
✓ Current & future research
✓ Resources
COVID-19 and Sleep Disruption
How much sleep do we need?

How much sleep do YOU get?
Healthy Sleep Duration

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that you get the following hours of sleep on a regular basis for optimal health at each stage of life.

![Graph showing recommended sleep duration by age group]

American Academy of Sleep Medicine:
https://aasm.org/new-infographics-help-you-share-aasm-sleep-duration-recommendations/
Why is sleep important?
Consequences of suboptimal sleep

• Cardiovascular disease
• Diabetes
• Hypertension
• Certain types of cancer
• IMMUNITY

• 6 + hours - protective factor for individuals with high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes
Mental health and sleep

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance use disorders, and relapse for those in recovery
- Suicidal ideation
What impacts sleep?
Two Process Model for Sleep Regulation

1) Homeostatic sleep drive
   Adenosine

2) Circadian rhythm
   Light
   Melatonin Secretion

Image courtesy of Medscape.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light at night</th>
<th>Shift Work</th>
<th>Puberty/Aging</th>
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<td>Travel across time zones</td>
<td>Inconsistent sleep/wake schedule</td>
<td>Early school start times</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genetics</td>
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<td>Electronic devices</td>
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What can we do to promote optimal sleep.....even during a global pandemic?
Daytime
1) Wake up at the same time* every day
*and get out of bed!
• Try to do this no matter what time you went to bed the night before
• Open blinds immediately upon awakening
• Have your morning coffee by a window
2) Move your body

• Get outside/exercise outside (even on cloudy days…)
• Tells your body it’s time to start the day
• The more active we are during the day, the better it is for our sleep

Photo courtesy of consumerreports.org
3) Maintain a regular routine

Regular schedule for meals, exercise, work, and play.

Find a routine that works for you and stick with it!
4) Avoid caffeine later in the day

• Individual sensitivity and tolerance varies—observe how caffeine impacts your sleep and adjust intake accordingly
Evening
5) Avoid alcohol close to bedtime

• Can assist with sleep onset but leads to fragmented sleep later in the night
6) Create a relaxing bedtime routine

• Keep a thought/worry journal
• Relaxing yoga or stretching
• Bathing/showering before bed -> lowers core body temperature
• Maybe read your phone a bedtime story…
• Diaphrastic breathing; 4-7-8 breaths

Image courtesy of www.thinklink.com
7) Limit electronics 1-2 hours before bed

- Limit media exposure to help reduce anxiety prior to bedtime.

- Limiting light exposure (especially close to your eye) is important before bed
  - Blue light filters on phones – better than nothing but limited in benefits
8) Create a “sleep sanctuary”

• Quiet, cool, dark bedroom

• Ear plugs/noise machine? Eye shades? Weighted blankets?

• Create the environment you feel you sleep best in
General sleep rules
9) Limit time in bed

• Bed = sleeping

• Bed ≠ place to pay bills, do work, eat, stress, listen to/read news about COVID-19, escape

• Can’t sleep? Out of bed and engage in relaxing activities with only dim lights on

• Don’t go to bed unless you are sleepy.

• Remember to maintain a consistent wake up time.
10) Consult your physician & behavioral health provider

- Treat underlying conditions that impact sleep
- Sleep apnea
- RLS syndrome
- Exploration of pharmacological treatments

First line treatment for insomnia is behavioral
  - CBT-I and BBT-I for treatment of insomnia

- [https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/cognitive-behavioral-therapy-insomnia](https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/cognitive-behavioral-therapy-insomnia)
But wait! There is something that helps you sleep better (and also feel better and live longer)

It is also free!
11) Move your body!
12) Consult your inner sleep expert!

- The best expert on your sleep is you!
- Research can be variable – many individual factors at play
- When do you feel you get your best sleep? Create those situations
- “Shelter in place” might provide more opportunities to notice/experiment when we get our best sleep!
13) Implement small changes to improve your sleep

- Pick 1 thing to work on this week
- Make sleep health SMART goals
- Remember your motivation for improved sleep!
- Utilize a sleep diary to track daytime behaviors that contribute to your best sleep; repeat those behaviors!
Current Research
Current Research: American Academy of Sleep Medicine Foundation

How much sleep do we need?
How much sleep do YOU get?
Hopefully (!) future research:

- Impact of companion and service dogs on veteran well-being (including sleep)
  Canines Providing Assistance to Wounded Warriors (C.PAWW-Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing)
  https://nursing.fau.edu/outreach/c-paww/

- Exploring sleep as a mechanism to improve police officer health, wellbeing, and safety
  College of Criminology and Criminal Justice
• AASM accredited sleep facility locator: http://sleepeducation.org/find-a-facility
• Free, evidenced-based sleep health infographics & information (American Academy of Sleep Medicine)
  • http://sleepeducation.org/healthysleep/infographics
  • http://sleepeducation.org/essentials-in-sleep/healthy-sleep-habits
• Sleep diary (National Sleep Foundation)
• CBT-I coach VA (free app), assists with sleep hygiene:
  • https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile/cbticoach_app_public.asp
• CBT-I online program (cost):
  • https://www.sleepio.com/
• Free guided meditations (for sleep):
  • marc.ucla.edu/mindful-meditations
• Diaphragmatic breathing exercises
  • https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/9445-diaphragmatic-breathing
• Harvard Health: “Strategies to improve sleep in these uncertain times”
  https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/strategies-to-promote-better-sleep-in-these-uncertain-times-2020032719333
• Sweet dream makers –provides beds and beddings to South Florida families in need:
  https://sweetdreammakers.org/
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