



# Wellness News Network™

Your Source for Health & Wellness Information

Issue 1, October 2023

## How to Get a Better Night's Sleep

Presented by:

Ask just about anybody these days and you'll find lack of sleep is one of the biggest health complaints. We've all been witness in recent years to the common antidotes for fatigue: an explosion in gulping coffee and energy drinks.

Sleep problems can interfere with your personal relationships, decrease your job productivity, and put you and others at risk when you're driving. Long-term insomnia places you at greater risk of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and stroke.

So how much sleep should you get? The National Sleep Association recommends 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night. But in its 2008 *Sleep in America Poll*, the association's results show the average person only gets 6 hours and 40 minutes.



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If you find lack of sleep is affecting your quality of life, you should discuss it with your Chiropractor for solutions.

### Tips for Better Sleep

Health experts agree you should practice good sleep hygiene to feel rested and rejuvenated. Use these tips and adopt these habits for a better night's sleep.

- **Examine Your Sleep Habits and Environment**

What are the best sleep positions for your body? Generally, sleeping on your back or your sides are best. However, in either position, the idea is to support your natural neck alignment.

As for where you sleep, make sure your bedroom is not too hot or too cold. It should be comfortable, dark and quiet. If it's too bright, try a sleep mask. Retire to bed the same time each night and rise at the same time each morning – even on weekends.

- **Choose the Right Pillow and Mattress**

The best pillow properly supports the neck. Use a thicker pillow if you're sleeping on your side to keep your neck straight and a thinner pillow if you're sleeping on your back.

### QUESTION:

Who snores more... men or women?

### ANSWER:

Men. Habitual snoring has been found in 40% of men and 24% of women--American Academy of Sleep Medicine

### TRUE OR FALSE:

A good tip for shift workers is to nap during their break

### ANSWER:

True: A 20 to 30 minute nap can improve alertness  
-American Academy of Sleep Medicine

There should be just enough cushion to maintain the natural curvature of your neck.

As for the right mattress, it is recommended that it have some give in the cushion so that you don't get any pressure points, but firm enough to support your natural structures.

- **Exercise and Meditation:  
A Perfect Pair**

Regular exercise relieves stress and improves sleep. But avoid rigorous exercise three hours before bedtime as this can actually keep you awake.

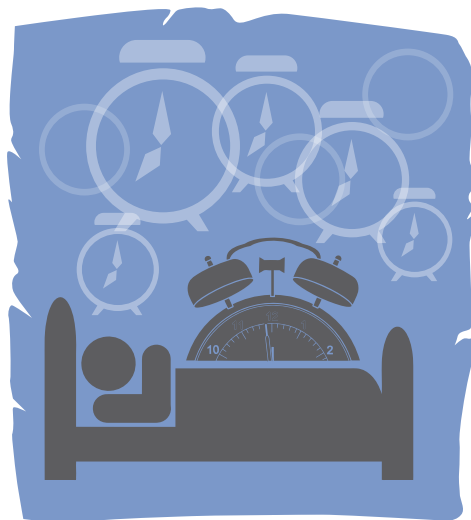
Meditation is a perfect complement to exercise. It's an effective way to relax both mind and body. To achieve better sleep, you need to meditate consistently for several weeks.

- **What You Eat Impacts Your Sleep**

A high fat diet can cause sleep problems, so cut back on saturated and trans fats. But a small snack before bedtime can actually aid sleep. Good bedtime food choices are bread, yogurt and banana. Avoid protein heavy snacks since protein produces energy. And refrain from alcohol and caffeinated drinks in the evening.

- **Quick Fixes Not Always  
the Best Choice**

Unfortunately, many people want a fast solution to insomnia and see sleeping pills as the best answer. But these medications can be habit forming and come with numerous side effects. You can find health supplements that may assist sleep, including valerian, chamomile, and melatonin. However, some natural products may cause adverse reactions, especially with medications. Get advice from your Chiropractor before using medications or supplements for sleep.



- **Solutions to Snoring**

According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, “habitual snoring has been found in about 24% of adult women and 40% of adult men”.[1] You're more likely to snore if you're overweight, consume alcohol, or smoke. To help silence snoring, try to...

- Sleep on your side
- Lose weight
- Avoid alcohol and muscle relaxants

You can find products that may provide some relief from snoring, including oral devices that keep your airway clear. If none of these suggestions help, discuss your snoring with your Chiropractor. Some people with chronic snoring may suffer from sleep apnea - a disorder that causes a person to actually stop breathing during sleep. Sufferers of this condition are vulnerable to developing serious health issues.

By adopting these tips and visiting your chiropractor on a regular basis, you're sure to get a better night's sleep as well as improving your overall health.

## Quote to Inspire

*“A healthy body is a guest chamber for the soul: a sick body is a prison.”*

*-Francis Bacon*

## Sleep Tips for Shift Workers

If you work irregular hours, you're more likely to develop sleep problems. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine provides some tips for shift workers...

- If possible, try to work clockwise shifts: Your new shift start time is later than your last shift
- Take a nap during your break
- Keep the same sleep schedule on workdays and days off
- Take the bus or get a ride home after work
- If you need to sleep during the day, stay out of the sun

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