



WELL~CONNECTED

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Sleep is a Necessity, Not a Luxury

We all know the importance of nutrition and exercise, but a commonly overlooked pillar of a healthy lifestyle is sleep. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), we need sleep not to rest our brains, but to re-charge our brains. Sleep helps us to think clearly, react quickly, and create memories.

Why is sleep important?

Sleep promotes good health and helps prevent chronic disease such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and depression. A lack of sleep can increase the risk of physical and mental health problems, accidents, injuries, disability and death.

How do I know if I'm sleep deprived?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 28% of US adults report sleeping 6 hours or less per night. By reducing your sleep amount by an hour and a half for just 1 night will limit your alertness during the day by 1/3. If you fall asleep in 5 minutes or less, you are sleep deprived.

What can I do to improve my sleep routine?

Quantity: You need between 7-9 hours of sleep per night to keep your immune system strong.

Quality: If you are having trouble sleeping, one of the following could be a culprit: fats, onions, chocolate, spicy foods, large meals late in the day (2-3 hours before you lay down), your head and shoulders are not elevated enough, alcohol consumption or smoking.

Timing: It is beneficial to keep a regular sleep routine; going to bed at the same time, and waking up at the same time. Alcohol, caffeine, and some medications can negatively impact the quality of your sleep. Be aware of the amount and time of day you are consuming these products.

Health: Poor sleep is linked to hormone secretions which can cause obesity. 17 hours without sleep leads to a decrease in performance comparable to a blood alcohol level of .05%. Deep sleep releases more of the growth hormone that boosts the repair of cells and tissues.



Resources:
National Wellness Institute: www.nationalwellness.org
American Academy of Sleep Medicine: www.aasmnet.org

Sleep is a necessity, not a luxury, and the pursuit of healthy sleep should be one of our top priorities."

~ Dr. Safwan Badr, president of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM)

This newsletter is provided by your Safety & Wellness Program Administrator, Edwards Risk Management, Inc.

Back Safety

Before lifting and carrying a heavy object, take a few moments to assess the situation.

- Squat down & lift items with your legs.
- How far will you have to carry the load?
- Is the way clear of clutter, cords, slippery areas, overhangs, stairs, curbs, or uneven surfaces?
- Will there be doors that are closed?
- Once you get the load up, will you be able to see over the load, or will the load block your view?
- Can the load be disassembled, carried in pieces, and then reassembled?

EYE INJURY



September is National Eye Injury Prevention month and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: "Each day about 2000 U.S. workers have a job-related eye injury that requires medical treatment. The majority of these injuries result from small particles or objects striking or

abrading the eye." Accident and loss reports repeatedly show that *safety equipment* was not being used when injury was sustained.

Contributing eye injury factors

- **Flying Particles-** Dust, metal slivers, sparks from grinders. Most of these objects are smaller than a pinhead.
- **Falling debris-** building materials, glass.
- **Chemical splashes of some sort-** acids, thinners, fuels, cleaning liquids, solvents.
- **Blood borne pathogens-** body fluids, blood.
- **Objects swinging, suspended or hanging-** low hanging tree limbs, ropes, chains, doors.

Types of eye protection

- At the very minimum wear safety glasses.
- Wear goggles when more protection is needed.
- Add a face shield over glasses or goggles for even greater protection.
- When cutting or welding, use a welding helmet and goggles.
- Make sure that other employees or bystanders are protected from the light and sparks coming from torch cutting or welding.

Though an injury can still occur, using the correct and proper protective equipment go hand in hand in reducing employee eye injuries.

Resources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/eye/>

HOOKED ON PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Anyone can become addicted to prescription medicines. Drugs used to relieve pain, anxiety, depression, insomnia, coughs, and those used to suppress appetite (diet pills) are major culprits.

4 No-nonsense tips

- Learn as much as you can about the drug that has been prescribed for you; ask about non-drug options.
- Question your doctor and pharmacist about the drug's side effects, and dangerous interactions with drugs, alcohol, and food.
- Continuously monitor the drug's effect on your individual body chemistry and report your body's reactions to your doctor.
- Before stopping a prescription or increasing the dose, call your doctor for advice.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, "Some people don't believe they're dependent on a drug, or that they're an addict, simply because the drug they've taken was prescribed by a doctor."

These too?

You can also get hooked on over-the-counter medications. Major culprits include:

- **Laxatives-** Don't use for more than two weeks or you can become dependent on them.
- **Eye Drops-** When used too often, they can make your eyes more red.
- **Nose sprays-** When used for more than a few days, they can make your nose more congested.
- **Codeine cough syrup-** Don't use for more than a few days.
- **Diet pills-** Nervousness, insomnia, elevated blood pressure, and headaches are some of the side effects of these drugs. They also can cause dangerous reactions when taken with other medications.

The above are intended for temporary use. If symptoms persist or if you're hooked on any of these medications, call your doctor for advice.



Resources: National Center for Health Statistics- www.cdc.gov/nchs/

Myth or Fact?

Myth: Eating late at night causes weight gain.

Fact: In reality, a calorie is a calorie, regardless of the time you consume it.

According to the U.S.D.A, "It does not matter what time of day you eat. It is what and how much you eat and how much physical activity you do during the whole day that determines whether you gain, lose, or maintain your weight."

Ask the Health Coach!



Q. After a stressful day at work, I have a hard time decompressing and getting to sleep at night. Do you have any suggestions for natural alternatives to sleep aids? I am afraid I'm becoming too dependent on over the counter sleep medicines.

A. Sleep aids are OK to take every once in a while, but be careful not to become dependent on them for a good night's rest. If you have trouble falling asleep, do not watch TV or eat in bed. Your body will begin associating your bed with activities other than sleep and will make it difficult to fall asleep.

Instead, indulge in relaxing activities before bed to help promote sleep:

- Meditate
- Listen to peaceful music
- Read a book in soft light
- Take a hot bath

These will help "train" your body toward rest. Also, studies show that people who exercise in the morning and at least 4 hours per week have less difficulty falling asleep.

Good Luck!

The Health Coach

Did You Know?

Chronic sleep loss ages your skin. Not getting enough sleep causes your body to release more cortisol – a stress hormone. Excessive amounts of cortisol can break down skin collagen – a protein that keeps skin elastic and smooth.

Crispy Oatmeal-Raisin Cookies

Makes 22 servings • Serving size: 2 (1 1/2-inch) cookies

These are a crispy, chompy version of the American classic. Filled with hearty whole wheat flour, oats, and just enough sugar, they're a treat you don't have to feel guilty about.

- 1 1/2 cups old-fashioned (not quick-cooking) oats
 - 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
 - 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 - 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1/3 cup 67% vegetable oil butter-flavored spread, at room temperature
 - 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
 - 1/4 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 large egg
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1/4 cup raisins
1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside.
 2. Combine the oats, all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt in a medium bowl and whisk to mix well. Set aside.
 3. Combine the butter-flavored spread, brown sugar, and granulated sugar in a large mixing bowl and beat at medium speed until the mixture is fluffy. Beat in the egg and vanilla. Add the oat mixture and beat at low speed until moistened. Stir in the raisins.
 4. Drop mounds of dough, 2 level teaspoons each, 2 inches apart, on the prepared baking sheets. Bake until the bottoms of the cookies are lightly browned but the centers remain soft, 10 to 12 minutes.
 5. Cool the cookies on the baking sheets on wire racks for 2 minutes. Remove from the baking sheets and cool completely on the wire racks. The cookies can be covered in an airtight container and stored at room temperature up to 2 days.

Exchanges: 1 Carbohydrate • 1/2 Fat

Calories 98, Calories from Fat 26, Total Fat 3 g, Saturated Fat 1 g, Cholesterol 10 mg, Sodium 83 mg, Total Carbohydrate 17 g, Dietary Fiber 1 g, Sugars 8 g, Protein 2 g.



HUSU ACADEMY

BREAK FREE



CHALLENGE:

BREAK FREE from your excuses & change your life!
 Choose 1 item from EACH category (move, eat, breathe)
 and do it consistently for 3 weeks.
 Contact your Wellness Coordinator to sign up!

MOVE

30 Mins of Activity
 3 Days per Week

Walk/ Jog
 Dance
 Jump Rope
 Stretch
 Yoga/Pilates
 Lift Weights

EAT & DRINK

Portion Control
 64 oz of Water per Day

MORE:
 3-5 Fruits & Veggies
 Lean Protein
 Whole Grains

LESS:
 Sugar
 Nicotine
 Alcohol

BREATHE

7-8 Hours
 of Sleep per Night

Be Thankful
 Be Approachable
 Laugh
 Complain Less
 Stress Less



“First Goldilocks ate Papa Bear’s porridge, then she ate Mama Bear’s porridge, then she ate Baby Bear’s porridge...and her cholesterol dropped 23 points!”

Success Spotlight



It [Boston Marathon] was an amazing experience and I was proud to be one of the 36,000 runners that day. They say there were 1 million spectators and I believe it. I have never run a marathon where the streets are full of people cheering you on from the start all the way to the end! The whole city of Boston was present and involved in some way.

I usually run listening to music, but this time I decided to just enjoy the crowd and used my phone to take pictures as I ran. I loved seeing the children giving me high fives along the way and passing out sliced oranges and bananas to runners. I ran through 8 towns to get to the finish line and as I ran through the towns, I saw the town fire departments out with their ladder trucks cheering us on. I saw helicopters, police with their dogs and our military men and woman protecting the streets as we ran. The crowd was loud and I could hear them yell my name and say, “Go Texas”, as they saw that written on both sides of my legs. And yes, there were tears as I saw a teenage boy on crutches going up a hill and a team pushing a man on a wheel chair, etc. It was a tough course and it was hot. I got blisters and my right hamstring kept wanting to cramp up as I went up the hills, but I was being pushed by the crowd and was determined to finish.

I suffered a tendonitis injury while training 11 weeks before Boston. I thought I had fractured my right foot and was in tears when my doctor told me to forget about running Boston if it’s fractured. I was relieved when my MRI results came back negative because Boston was my focus. I had to stop running for two weeks and had to slowly work my way back up as I healed. I saw a physical therapist once a week and with 9 weeks of training I was worried about not being well prepared to run. I was told that I would not be able to run fast or I would injure my foot again.

As hard as it was, I knew I had to listen and do whatever they wanted me to do. It was mine and every runner’s dream to run Boston and nothing would get in my way. You see, this race wasn’t about me trying to PR, it was about running in honor of all those injured last year and I was going to be the legs of those who never will run again. I was running for all runners across the nation who share my passion. It was a dream come true and I’m happy to say I finished Boston Strong!

Share Your Success Story

Do you have a success story to share? Simply e-mail your story to the editors of Well-Connected at well-connected@edwardsrisk.com with Success Story in the subject line. Please be sure to provide your name, school district or county, e-mail address and phone number. We would love to hear from you!

Lydia Calahan, M.Ed.
 ASPIRE Site Coordinator
 Birdville ISD
 Jack C. Binion Elementary