



The Spinal Column

Are You Getting Enough ZZZ's?

By Rachel Funchion

Sleep is absolutely essential for normal, healthy function.

Do you often wake up in the morning not feeling refreshed and ready to start your day? Are you struggling to get through each day? You are probably experiencing what the majority of the population experiences on a daily basis. Sleep deprivation.

On the other hand, many of us have discovered that a good night's sleep is often the best way to help cope with stress, solve problems, or recuperate from illness. It has been said that sleep is necessary for cell regeneration and collagen production. Not getting enough sleep can result in sagging skin, lack of elasticity and dark circles under the eyes." According to many experts, most adults require about eight to ten hours of sleep every night to benefit from all the good things rest has to offer such as better concentration and creativity, boosting your immune system and of course, improving your appearance.

Did you know that getting the right amount of sleep on a consistent basis could potential make you look 5-10 years younger?! The term "beauty sleep" actually refers to the third and fourth stage of deep sleep. This is the time when a secretion of growth hormones help to repair and rebuild the body tissue. The body's cells also show increased population and reduced breakdown of proteins during deep sleep. Since proteins are the building blocks needed for cell growth and repairing damage from stress and ultraviolet rays, this stage of sleep is quite important.

Sleep is a dynamic process during which the brain is very active. There are recognized stages of sleep, each of which is characterized by a different type of brain activity. Sleep is known to be important for cognition, braining functioning and overall health. Furthermore, the amount and quality of dreaming sleep is associated with mood disorders such as depression and neurological conditions such as dementia.

Sleep is prompted by natural cycles of activity in the brain and consists of two basic stages: Rapid Eye Movement

(REM) sleep when most dreaming occurs and deep sleep known as Non-REM (NREM) sleep. We get less of this sleep as we get older: people under 30 enjoy about two hours of restorative sleep a night, while those over 65 may get a mere 30 minutes.

According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, about 40 million people in the United States suffer from chronic long-term sleep disorders each year and an additional 20 million people suffer occasional sleep problems.

There are more than 70 different sleep disorders that are generally classified into one of three categories:

- Lack of sleep (insomnia)
- Disturbed sleep (sleep apnea)
- Excessive sleep (narcolepsy)

Of these categories, insomnia is the most common and can be defined as inadequate or poor-quality sleep due to one or more of the following: difficulty falling asleep, waking up frequently during the night or too early in the morning. Insomnia usually affects individuals by causing tiredness throughout the day, a lack of energy, difficulty concentrating and irritability. Insomnia lasting from a single night to a few weeks is known as transient. If episodes of transient insomnia occurs from time to time, the insomnia is said to be intermittent. Furthermore, Insomnia is said to be chronic if it occurs on most nights and lasts a month or more.

The causes and risks of insomnia vary. Females over 60 years of age are more likely to experience insomnia. Other conditions such as, stress, anxiety and certain medical conditions can all cause reoccurrences of insomnia. Chronic insomnia can be caused by continued stressful situations, lack of exercise and fresh air and, or a poor diet. The misuses of caffeine, alcohol, or other substances are also common factors.

Touch Therapies that induce relaxation help insomnia by encouraging the brain to produce sleep-producing chemicals

If you are someone suffering from frequent episodes of insomnia or just want to improve your quality of sleep. Try any of these **complementary treatments**.

1.) Massage Therapy

Receiving a body massage as close to your bedtime as possible can relieve muscles tension, reduce anxiety and boost sleep-enhancing brain chemicals.

2.) Aromatherapy

The essential oils of lavender, chamomile and jasmine are all oils that help to induce sleep. These oils can be inhaled in a tissue or a steam. The oil can be added to a warm bath or massaged into the body using carrier oil.

3.) Naturopathy

A healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables and grains, regular fresh air and exercise are basic recommendations for experiencing a good night's sleep. The practitioner may also address food intolerances or digestive problems.

4.) Homeopathy

A homoeopathist will prescribe a remedy that is suited to your constitution.

5.) Western and Chinese Herbalism

The practitioner will suggest gentle herbs to restore the nervous system and aid relaxation. Other less-gentle herb may need to be used.

6.) Acupuncture

This method of treatment stimulates the appropriate meridians by encouraging the release of endorphins, the body's natural mood-enhancing chemicals.

7.) Chiropractic Care

Chiropractic care helps restore the central nervous system. Regular treatments can increase sleep quality and very effective in treating sleep disorders.

Sources used: Your Health Source Magazine, Encyclopedia of Healing Therapies, and Holisticonline.com

About the Author:



Rachel Funchion attended Bramalea Secondary School and graduated with honours in 2000. Throughout her high school years, Rachel worked for the City of Brampton in aquatics as a lifeguard, swimming and aquafit instructor. She also worked for a private swim school.

Post-secondary education began by becoming a Certified Fitness Instructor Specialist through Can-Fit-Pro. The following year, Rachel continued her studies at Humber College and graduated with honours from the Social Service Worker Program in 2003. She then worked for three years as a Family Support Worker specializing in families with children who have developmental disabilities.

In May 2008, Rachel graduated from the College of Health Studies and is now a Licensed Holistic Health Practitioner. Her expertise as a Fitness Instructor Specialist is used as needed in assisting patients recovering from motor vehicle accidents in their gym rehabilitation sessions. Currently, Rachel is working on establishing herself as a Holistic Health Practitioner at the clinic. Furthermore, she has her own business, administrating treatments to individual through home-care service.

Main and Franchise Clinics:



In GoodHands Rehabilitation & Wellness Centre
Bramalea City Centre – Inside GoodLife Fitness
Unit 50A - 25 Peel Centre Drive, Brampton, ON L6T 3R5
Phone: (905) 453-5858 **Fax:** (905) 453-8995
Email: info@ingoodhandswellness.com

Services:

- Acupuncture
- Chiropractic Care
- Massage Therapy
- Naturopathic Medicine
- Orthotics
- Physiotherapy

Products:

- Athletic Braces & Splints
- Compression Stockings
- Memory Foam Pillows
- Custom Made Orthotics
- Health Supplements

Clinic Hours:

Mon. and Wed.: 9:30 am - 8:30 pm
Tues. and Thurs.: 10:00 am - 9:00 pm
Fri.: 9:30 am - 7:00 pm
Sat.: 9:30 am - 2:30 pm
Sun.: Closed

In GreatHands Chiropractic & Wellness Centre

Inside Oshawa Centre Mall
C/O Goodlife, 419 King Street West, Oshawa, ON L1J 2K5
Phone: (905) 433-9520 **Fax:** (905) 433-8144
Email: oshawa@ingreathands.com

Services:

- Chiropractic Care
- Dry Blood Analysis
- Hair Analysis
- Irridology
- Massage Therapy
- Nutritional Urinalysis
- Orthotics
- Psychology
- Reflexology
- Rehabilitation
- X-Rays

Products:

- Custom Made Orthotics
- Health Supplements

Clinic Hours:

Mon. - Thurs.: 9:00 am - 7:30 pm
Fri.: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm
Sat.: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sun.: Closed