

Sleep for Safety

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Sleep is a basic necessity of life ... just like air, food, water.

Lack of sleep has many unfortunate consequences.

Engaging in proper sleep is energizing.

Evaluate your pattern of healthy sleeping.

Prepare for shift work with a plan for sleep.

Sleep (or lack of sleep) has a significant impact on all aspects of our life:

Physical—

Energy level

Body comfort

Susceptibility to illness

Psychological—

Clarity of thought

Mood

Judgment

Interest in proper eating and exercise

Behavioral—

Reaction time

Ability to cope with stress (job, home)

Effectiveness in listening

Social—

Interactions with coworkers

Relationships (spouse, family, friends)

Community interests

What's a person to **do**?

- ◆ *Plan ahead to arrange for a good sleep pattern.*

Most adults need 7--8 hours of uninterrupted sleep each day. There are five (5) stages of sleep (Relaxation, Light Sleep, Deep Sleep, Deeper Sleep, REM Sleep). "Good Sleep" = 5-- 6 cycles through the five stages. Sleep is not a passive state. Several vital tasks occur as you work through the stages of sleep.

- ◆ *Coordinate schedules with others in your household.*

Clarify the implications of the work schedule and determine appropriate priorities. If the preferred amount of uninterrupted sleep is not possible, establish a nap plan.

- ◆ *Arrange for a good sleeping environment.*

Control stimuli (e.g., noises, lighting, temperature).

- ◆ *Incorporate some "down time" prior to the sleep period.*

Take time to unwind and relax before trying to go to sleep (e.g., reading, music, bath).

- ◆ *Be aware that "sleep debt" cannot be entirely resolved by sleeping in on the weekend.*

- ◆ *Continue to have a daily exercise regimen.*

- ◆ *Consult with your personal physician or AMH if you have a sleep disorder.*

What's a person **not to do**?

- ◆ *Ingest a large meal or stimulants as the sleep period approaches.*

The process of digestion may interrupt sleep. Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants.

- ◆ *Consume alcoholic beverages before bed.*

A "nightcap" may help you get to sleep, but alcohol keeps you in the lighter stages of sleep, and you will wake up in the middle of the sleep period when the sedating effects have worn off.

- ◆ *Continue to lie in bed when having difficulty falling asleep.*