

zzzzzzzzzz Sleep Health zzzzzzzzzz

What is sleep hygiene?

Sleep hygiene is a variety of different practices that are necessary to have restful, quality nighttime sleep and full daytime alertness.

Why is it important to practice good sleep hygiene?

Just like breathing – sleep is an essential and basic human need!

Poor sleep habits are among the most common problems encountered in our society and the effects of sleep deprivation can be quite detrimental. Some of the consequences:

In the short term:

- **Decreased Performance and Alertness:** Sleep deprivation induces significant reductions in performance and alertness. Reducing your nighttime sleep by as little as one and a half hours for just one night could result in a reduction of daytime alertness by as much as 32%.
- **Memory and Cognitive Impairment:** Decreased alertness and excessive daytime sleepiness impair your memory and your cognitive ability, and your ability to think and process information. Sleep deprivation reduces attention, alertness, vigilance, and decision-making ability by 50 percent; communication skills by 30 percent; and memory by 20 percent. It also contributes to depression, irritability, mood disorders and the ability to reason.
- **Stress Relationships:** Disruption of sleep due to lack of sleep or a sleep disorder may cause significant problems for the relationship (for example, separate bedrooms, conflicts, moodiness, etc.).
- **Poor Quality of Life:** Lack of sleep can cause fatigue and can affect your lifestyle. For example, unable to participate in certain activities that require sustained attention, like going to the movies, seeing your child in a school play, or watching a TV show.
- **Occupational Injury:** Excessive sleepiness also contributes to a greater than twofold higher risk of sustaining an occupational injury.
- **Automobile Injury:** The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates conservatively that each year drowsy driving is responsible for at least 100,000 automobile crashes, 71,000 injuries, and 1,550 fatalities.

In the long term

- High blood pressure
- Heart attack, Heart failure and Stroke
- Obesity and increased risk for diabetes
- Depressed immune functioning
- Hormone dysregulation: essential for regulating growth/repair and wakefulness/alertness.

Exacerbation of physical, mental or emotional problems:

- Anxiety and Depression
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)