

Sleep

MAKE A NIGHT OF IT.

The Importance of Sleep

Adequate sleep is vital to good physical, mental, and emotional health, as well as safety and well-being. Sufficient sleep is increasingly being recognized as an essential aspect of chronic disease prevention and health promotion, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Conversely, insufficient sleep is linked to the onset and management complication of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and depression, as well as other diseases. How much sleep is sufficient? The National Sleep Foundation reports that adults typically need 7-9 hours a night, although needs vary from person to person and tend to change with age.

Common Sleep Disorders

At least 40 million Americans each year suffer from chronic, long-term sleep disorders, according to the National Sleep Foundation. Types of sleep disorders include:

Insomnia – Insomnia is an inability to fall or stay asleep that prevents normal functioning throughout the day. It can lead to a decreased ability to make decisions, solve problems, and concentrate.

Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) – Restless legs syndrome may cause involuntary jerking of the limbs, as well as an achy or painful sensation in the legs. RLS makes falling asleep particularly difficult for many people.

Obstructive Sleep Apnea – Sleep apnea is characterized by loud snoring, gasping during sleep, brief awakenings, and daytime sleepiness. Approximately 50 percent of people who suffer from sleep apnea are overweight.

Helpful Habits

As many as 20-30 million people in the United States experience intermittent sleep-related problems. For some, taking steps to improve sleeping habits and conditions can go a long way toward ensuring a better night's sleep on a regular basis and eliminating daytime sleepiness. Consider the following suggestions.

- ✓ **Go to bed at the same time every night and rise at the same time every morning, even on weekends and holidays.**
- ✓ **Make sure that your sleep environment is quiet, dark, comfortable, and cool.**
- ✓ **Use your bed only for sleeping, not for watching television, working, or listening to music.**
- ✓ **Move computers, televisions, and other electronics out of your bedroom.**
- ✓ **Do not eat large or heavy meals close to bedtime.**

Treatment

If you experience sleep-related problems, consult your physician or a sleep doctor for diagnosis and treatment options. In some cases, prescription medication, behavioral therapy, or a combination of both is used to treat insomnia.

If daytime sleepiness affects your day-to-day routine, consult a physician to determine whether you are experiencing a sleep disorder.

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Put Sleep Disorders to Rest

The Sleep Medicine and Research Center at St. Luke's Hospital is a medical facility for diagnosing and treating patients with sleep-related disorders. These conditions include difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, breathing problems during sleep, other abnormal occurrences during sleep and daytime sleepiness or fatigue.

Find more information at www.stlukes-stl.com.

Sleep Medicine & Research Center

