'Are You Getting Enough Sleep??'

Sleep is a really important part of our life, it helps us to feel well, focused and happy. Most people experience a bad night's sleep now and again, but if you regularly don't get enough sleep or have bad quality sleep it can really affect how you feel and what you can get done through the day.

Good sleep habits have been shown to improve mood, concentration and performance. They may also help control overeating and help prevent obesity.

Did you know??

For every hour of sleep you miss at night there is:

14% increase in the risk of unpleasant emotions or feelings that affect day to day function.

42% increase in the chance of having thoughts of suicide

23% increase in the chance of using tobacco or alcohol

38% increase in the chance of feeling sad and hopeless

58% increase in the chance of suicidal behavior

People who regularly go to sleep very late each night and don't wake up until the afternoon may have Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome and are an increased risk of developing insomnia and depression. Seek advice and guidance on this from your doctor.

Very short sleepers (less than 5 hours each night) are more likely to experience long term mental health issues than people who get enough sleep.

Up in the morning or still feel tired during the day, something else might be going on. If you are worried about any aspect of your sleep, or are experiencing any of the negative consequences of bad sleep, get in touch with your doctor.

Recommended …….

Everyone is different, and the amount of sleep you need might be different to what your friends need. In general though:

People aged 14-17 need between

8-10 hours each night

People aged 18-25 need between

7-9 hours each night

People aged 26-64 need

7-9 hours each night

People aged 65+ need

7-8 hours each night

What gets in the way of a good night's sleep??

☹ Sounds basic but the bed you sleep in, how long have you had your mattress, does it need changing?

☹ Preexisting health conditions

☹ Medication

☹ Excess use of technology – put that mobile phone down!

☹ Shift working and changes in body clock

☹ Environmental factors such as social pressures, stress at work/school/family

How do I get a good night's sleep?

If you are having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep here are a few things you can try?

✓ Set a time for going to bed and waking up – the same time each day, including the weekend. This helps your body to get into a routine. Try not take naps in the day as this affects your body's routine.

✓ Turn off screens such as phones, laptops, TV's at least 30 minutes before bed time. The light from screens can stop your brain producing the sleep chemical melatonin, which is important in helping you get to sleep.

✓ Control your exposure to light – use a black out blind if necessary

✓ Try not to worry about having a bad sleep. A lot of people underestimate how much sleep they get

✓ Exercise during the day – people who exercise regularly sleep better at night and feel less sleepy during the day. Regular exercise also improves the symptoms of insomnia

✓ Be smart about what you eat and drink – so limit the coffee and tea before you go to bed, avoid big meals at night, cut out the sugary foods and refined carbs

✓ Wind down and clear your head – the more overstimulated your brain becomes during the day, the harder it can be to slow down and unwind at night

✓ If you cannot get to sleep or cannot get back to sleep, get out of bed and do something until you feel tired again

✓ Have a night time routine, include relaxing activities such as taking a bath

If you still are having problems sleeping, please go and seek medical advice from your doctor.

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