



Employee Assistance Program Services Newsletter

SPRING 2008

Improve Your Sleep, Improve Your Life

Did you know that as many as 47 million adults put themselves at risk for injury and health problems by not getting enough sleep? Did you know that the secret to a great memory, healthy immune system, looking younger, and shedding pounds may be as simple as getting a good night's sleep? According to the National Sleep Foundation, evaluating your sleep hygiene and getting assistance, if needed, can significantly affect your physical, mental, emotional, social and occupational health. The following are tips to help you improve your sleep and your life:

1. **Determine Your Ideal Bedtime.** On average, you need to complete five cycles of sleep every night for your body to get the amount of rest it needs. Each sleep cycle lasts about 90 minutes, which means you will need a total of seven and a half hours of sleep. To figure out your optimal bedtime, subtract seven and half hours from the time that you need to wake up. If this is something that you need to change, make the change gradual. Keep this in mind: your body needs two weeks to adjust to a change and can handle a move of only 30 to 45 minutes at a time.
2. **Check Your Mattress.** A mattress should support you without leaving gaps between the bed and your body. If your mattress is more than 9 or 10 years old, consider getting a new one. Not in your budget? Buy a memory foam mattress pad, which can be fairly inexpensive. Also, notice the amount of support your pillow provides. According to the American Chiropractic Association, a good pillow should keep your head and neck level with your upper back and spine when you sleep on your back.
3. **Set a Bedtime Routine.** Do the same relaxing activity, like reading or knitting, every night before bed. By doing this your body will begin to associate the activity with the task of sleeping, and just doing it will make you drowsy.
4. **Dim the Lights and Turn off the TV.** Your TV, computer and PDA devices emit light that can suppress the release of melatonin, the hormone your body produces when you get that drowsy feeling. Dimming the lights, turning off the TV and getting off the computer an hour before bedtime may help you fall asleep.
5. **Don't Lay in Bed Longer Than 20 Minutes Without Sleeping.** If you have been laying in bed for 20 minutes and still don't feel sleepy, get up and read or do some other relaxing activity and then return to bed when you begin to feel sleepy.
6. **Go On a Mental Vacation.** Think about an enjoyable experience you've had, like a vacation and re-create it in your mind. Try to use all five senses as you slip off into a relaxed state. What do you feel? What do you see? What do you smell? What do you hear?

To learn more about how to improve your sleep and to improve your life, call AssistNOW, the EAP Division of Recovery Resources at 216/431-4140. We can help!

Source: Johni Fiber, Therapist-AssistNOW
March-2008

The History of Daylight Saving Time

Although standard time in [time zones](#) was instituted in the United States and Canada by the railroads in 1883, it was not established into U.S. law until the Act of March 19, 1918, sometimes called the **Standard Time Act**. This act also established daylight saving time. Daylight savings time was re-established nationally early in World War II, and was continuously observed from February 09, 1942 to September 30, 1945. The **Uniform Time Act of 1966** provided standardization in the dates of beginning and end of daylight time in the U.S. but allowed for local exemptions from its observance. This act provided that daylight time begin on the last Sunday in April and end on the last Sunday in October.

However, starting in 2007, daylight savings time begins in the United States on the second Sunday in March and ends on the first Sunday in November. On the second Sunday in March clocks are set ahead one hour and on the first Sunday in November clocks are set back one hour. These dates were established by the **Energy Policy Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-58, 119 Stat 594 (2005)**.

Today, approximately 70 countries utilize Daylight Saving Time in at least a portion of the country. Japan, India and China are the only major industrialized countries that do not observe some form of daylight saving.

Source: webexhibits.org



TIME MANAGEMENT

Do you have a problem meeting deadlines or commitments? Do you find yourself wishing for a twenty-fifth hour to the day or an eighth day to the week? If so, you are not alone; but you can learn how to make the most out of that precious resource, **TIME**. Time management is an important tool that can help you succeed in school, work and other personal endeavors. By learning how to manage your time you will be able to achieve more, have more free time, overcome procrastination, lead a balance life, meet deadlines and reduce stress.

It's very important to get in the habit of setting priorities and deciding how much time to devote to each task you must accomplish. In doing so, you will be in control of your life and you won't have to miss out on the social/recreational activities that are important to you. By using time management techniques and setting priorities, you will be better able to avoid spending too much time on activities that are unimportant or uninteresting to you and reduce wasted time.

The first step to effective time management begins with finding out how you use your time. Do this by keeping an activity log for a week. Evaluate your results by asking yourself, "Did I accomplish what I was supposed to? Was I often pressed for time? At what time of day was I most productive? Least productive? How much time was allotted for personal activities?"

Your next step is to make a list of everything you plan to do, dividing the list into fixed commitments and flexible commitments. Fixed commitments are those tasks that you absolutely must complete by a specific deadline. Flexible commitments are obligations you can meet on a time available basis. Assign priorities to your list and set aside enough time to do the designated tasks.

Learn how to schedule. We all have best times to work and play, so plan your work schedule around your peak energy times. Also, there are additional steps that you can take that will help you accomplish your goals:

- Compile a "to do" list each week of tasks that must be completed.
- Prioritize the tasks on your list in order of importance and according to deadlines.
- Try to complete tasks with a minimum of interruptions.
- Don't over commit your time. Learn to say "NO."
- Delegate responsibility, when appropriate.
- Allow time for breaks, personal time and social activities.

You can learn to be more productive and efficient, with less stress and procrastination, by incorporating time management techniques into your work and personal routine. Put an end to that race against the clock! To learn more about time management, call AssistNOW, the EAP Division of Recovery Resources at 216/431-4140.

Source: The Counseling Center for Human Development
Kent State University

Tips for Spring Gardening

With blankets of snow, freezing temperatures and trees glistening with icicles, it may be too soon to start planting anything in the ground. It's not too early though to begin thinking about what crops or flowers to plant this year. May 15th is a good time for green thumbs to head outside and plant crops and flowers.

Pansies and hellebores are good to plant for spring because they are considered cold weather crops. Trees and shrubs can be planted "as soon as the ground starts to thaw." You just need to wait and be careful of a later frost. If flowers are planted too soon, they may suffer frost burn.

Before bulbs and veggies are planted, gardeners should lift and turn over soil so its not hard. A hard surface makes the ground much more difficult to plant in.

While May is the ideal month for planting, those who wait for June are in the clear. However, planting should not be done in the middle of the day because the weather could be too hot. Morning or evening would work much better!

Spring is also a good time to call your EAP--AssistNOW if you or someone you know is in need of help. We can be reached at 216/431-4140.



Remember,
for confidential assistance call:

AssistNOW

The EAP Division of
Recovery Resources

216.431.4140
1.800.840.4654