

Sleep Well: How to Get a Good Night's Sleep

**Presented by
CIGNA Employee Assistance Program**

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Seminar Goals

- Learn sleep facts, common myths about sleep, and the consequences of sleep deprivation
- Discover how sleep works and what interferes with sleeping well
- Find out some of the basics about a variety of sleep disorders
- Gain tips for sleeping well



Sleep Facts⁷

- 63% of American adults get less than 8 hours of sleep on weeknights
- 7 out of 10 Americans experience frequent sleep problems
- Women are more likely than men to have insomnia, which is characterized by difficulty getting to sleep, maintaining sleep, or waking too early
- Half of American adults have experienced insomnia at least a few nights a week during the past year
- 46% need an alarm clock to wake up four or more mornings a week
- 53% of American adults have driven while drowsy. 20% say they have dozed off while driving



Myths About Sleep

- “Everyone should get 8 hours of sleep each night.”
- “If you miss a few hours of sleep one night, you can catch up the next night.”
- “You need less sleep as you age.”
- “Children who don’t get enough sleep at night will show signs of sleepiness during the day.”
- “Sleeping pills are the answer.”



“True or False?”

- Coffee overcomes the effects of drowsiness
- I can tell when I’m going to fall asleep
- I can’t take naps
- Being sleepy makes you misperceive things

- Accidents
 - Motor Vehicle
 - Industrial
- Impaired judgment/productivity on the job
- Impaired motor functioning
- Impaired emotional functioning

The Stages of Sleep

Stage 1:

Light sleep. You drift in and out of sleep and can be wakened easily. Eyes move slowly and muscle activity slows.

Stage 2:

Your eye movements stop and your brain waves become slower with occasional bursts of rapid waves called sleep spindles.

Stage 3:

Deep sleep. Very slow brain waves called delta waves appear, mixed with smaller, faster waves.

Stage 4:

Deep sleep. The brain produces mostly delta waves. There are no eye movements and no muscle activity.

Stage 5:

REM sleep. Breathing becomes more rapid, irregular, and shallow. Eyes jerk quickly, limb muscles become temporarily paralyzed. Dreams almost always happen in this stage, but may happen in other sleep stages as well.

How Sleepy are You?⁶

Do you fall asleep in the following situations?

Situation	Very likely/Somewhat likely/Not at all likely
1. Reading	
2. Watching TV	
3. Talking with someone	
4. Riding in a car	
5. Sitting down after lunch	
6. Within 5 minutes of laying down in bed at night	
7. At your desk/In a meeting	

If you answered “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to some of the above questions, you may not be getting enough sleep. You may want to talk with your doctor about your symptoms.

Adapted from the Epworth Sleepiness Scale

Johns M.W. (1991). A new method for measuring daytime sleepiness: the Epworth sleepiness scale. *Sleep* 14 (6): 540–5.



Habits That May Disturb Sleep

- Caffeine
- Smoking or chewing tobacco
- Alcohol
- Eating
- Sedentary lifestyle/Exercising too close to bedtime
- Television/computer before bed
- Inconsistent schedule

Medical Illnesses That May Disturb Sleep⁵

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Weight Problems
- Heartburn
- Kidney disease
- Menopause
- Psychological disorders

■ Insomnia

- Transient
- Intermittent
- Chronic
- Learned

- Breathing disorders during sleep
 - Snoring
 - Sleep apnea
- Movement disorders during sleep
 - Restless leg syndrome
 - Periodic limb movement disorder

- Circadian Rhythm Sleep Disorders
 - Delayed sleep phase syndrome
 - Jet lag
 - Shift work
 - Seasonal affective disorder

Practicing Good Sleep Hygiene

- Establish relaxing pre-sleep rituals
- Avoid caffeine within 4 – 6 hours of bedtime
- Avoid nicotine close to bedtime or during the night
- Use bedroom only for sleep
- If unable to fall asleep within 15 – 20 minutes, leave the bedroom and do a non-stimulating activity
- Reduce use of alcohol, especially within 2 hours of bedtime



Practicing Good Sleep Hygiene (continued)

- Have a light snack (carbohydrate + protein) before bedtime and avoid large meals in the evening
- Exercise, but avoid within 2 hours of bedtime
- Minimize light, noise, and temperature extremes in the bedroom
- Get up at the same time every day
- Go to bed only when you are sleepy



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