



SLEEP

WELLNESS

A Guide for Women

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How sleep can impact your overall health.

Quality sleep has a huge impact on your overall health.

Poor sleep is common, with 25% of US adults reporting insufficient sleep about 15 out of 30 days. When you are not receiving the appropriate amount of sleep each night you are more likely to suffer from memory loss, mood swings, negative heart effects, mental health issues, poor immune system, weight gain, and much more. According to the Sleep Association, 50-70 million US adults have a sleep disorder.



Stats on lack of sleep

- 67% of adults who sleep over 7 hours report excellent mental health
- The risk of developing depression is 5x higher in people with insomnia
- Chronic sleep deprivation raises risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes
- Lack of sleep reduces the body's sensitivity to insulin, upping the risk of type 2 diabetes.
- Sleeping 5 hours or less increases risk of dying from any cause up to 26%
- Sleeping less than 6 hours leads to 20% higher risk of developing high blood pressure



Managing sleep debt.

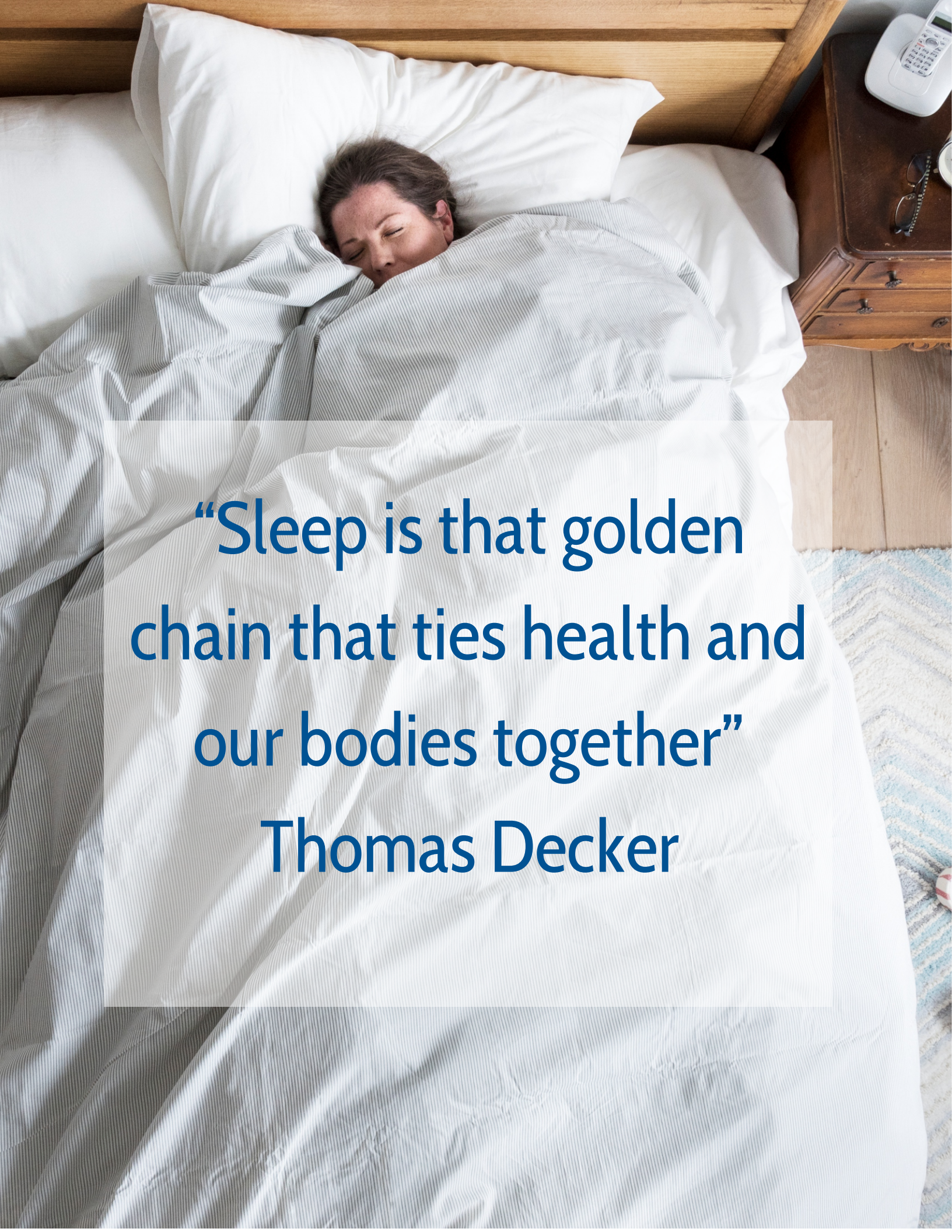


Having trouble catching up your sleep?

Like financial debt, when you acquire sleep debt you're in trouble. However, unlike financial debt, you can't repay this. If you lose a certain amount of sleep one week, sleeping the entire weekend away unfortunately will not make up for it. In fact, it may even make you more tired when Monday rolls back around - and so the cycle begins.

The more sleep debt you rack up the more sleep deprived you become, and the less aware of it you are. The only way to make up for your loss of sleep is getting back on track. Going to bed 15-20 minutes earlier, taking a small nap during the day, and maybe taking a small vacation to help you relax.

The key is to get out of debt and stay out of debt! Once you find out how much sleep it is your body is needing to feel rejuvenated again, stick to your schedule.

A photograph of a woman with dark hair sleeping peacefully in a bed. She is covered by a light-colored, striped duvet. The bed has white pillows and a wooden headboard. To the right, a wooden nightstand holds a white cordless phone and a pair of glasses. A blue and white patterned rug is visible on the floor next to the bed.

**“Sleep is that golden
chain that ties health and
our bodies together”
Thomas Decker**

Tracking your Sleep Wellness.



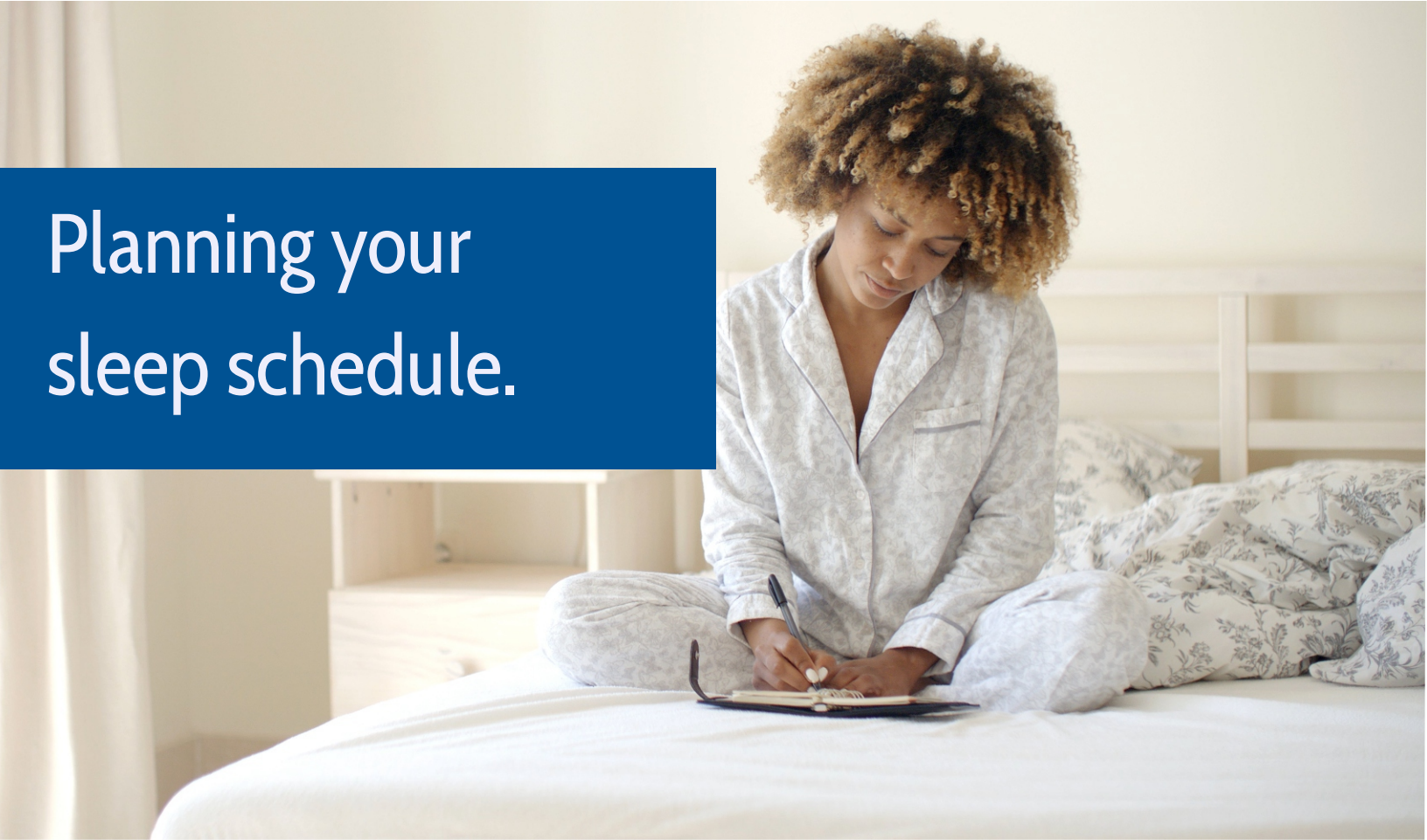
Often times we are all too busy with our daily lives and forget the fact that sleep is essential and should certainly have our attention. An easy way to start paying attention to your sleep and your sleep habits is by tracking your sleep wellness.

You can track your sleep through sleep apps on your smart phone, or wearable sleep devices. Devices like this will diagnose sleep issues, however they monitor your sleep movements, how often you wake up, and some can even tell if you snore or talk in your sleep.

Simply keeping a personal journal log of how you slept is also another option for tracking your sleep. Pay attention to the activities you do and what you consume throughout the day to see how it is affecting your sleep.

Download and print
Vitalistics Sleep Wellness
Diary as a template to
begin tracking your
sleep wellness.

Planning your sleep schedule.



Having a set sleep schedule should be as important as any other part of your daily agenda. For the most efficient and satisfying sleep, this schedule should remain the same through the week and weekend – waking up, winding down, and falling asleep, keeping them consistent.

How do you know when and for how long you should sleep?

While most people require 7-8 hours of sleep each night, everyone is different and our schedules are not the same. The best way to be proactive about this is to keep a sleep journal for a couple of weeks to figure out what works best for you, and has you feeling the most refreshed throughout the day. Now obviously, things go on in our lives that make it hard for us to stick to this schedule 7 days a week, but you will likely see a difference even if its 5 nights. So, give it a try!



You can even download our FREE Sleep Wellness Diary to help you keep track and find your sleep sweet spot!

Bed time habits.

The last thing you should be doing at the end of the day is rushing around to get things done before bed. Everyone should have some sort of wind-down time, in which you transition from your hectic daily activities and prepare yourself for sleep.

Establishing a relaxing wind-down routine before bed should include turning off electronics like your TV, laptop, and cell phone and replacing them with relaxing activities 1-2 hours before bedtime. This will help prepare your body to sleep by reducing stimulus and replacing busy activities with relaxing ones.



Tips for your wind-down routine

- Brew some chamomile tea – Studies find the humble herb can reduce anxieties and get you into a better head space for sleep.
- Try a hot bath or shower- Stepping from warm water into that pre-cooled bedroom will cause body temperatures to drop slightly, which can trigger sleepy feelings by slowing down metabolic activity.
- Read a chapter from your favorite book, listen to your favorite song, write about your day in your journal.
- Keep a notepad by your bedside for when you can't fall asleep. This way if you have something on your mind preventing you to sleep you can take a moment to write it down and keep your free your mind.
- Wearing comfortable sleep-wear or no clothes at all will help regulate your body temperature better and help you snooze faster.
- If you are having trouble falling asleep for more than 20 minutes, step out of your bedroom for a little while and go back when you begin to feel sleepy.





Sleep positions.

Do you ever wonder why you are still tired, even after a full 8 hours of sleep? Well the way you lay could be affecting your sleep quality.

Studies show that lying on your back is typically the best position as it helps improve your overall posture, and is good for the spine, neck, and arms. However, for some people this may cause lower back pain, and if you have sleep apnea it can make snoring worse.

A solution for the snoring is sleeping on your side. According to the National Sleep Foundation, sleeping on your side is most common, and sleeping on your left side specifically can reduce heart burn, and is good for optimal brain function. Sleeping on your side can also reduce neck and back pain and is typically best for pregnant women.



Laying on your stomach the worse way to sleep. It puts strain on your spine and unnatural stress on internal organs. It can also cause muscle and joint pain and can cause you to wake up with numbness.



Furry friends in the bedroom.

Studies show that sleeping with your pet can disrupt your sleep due to waking up during the night, constant tossing and turning, sharing bed space, uncleanliness, and potential allergies. On the other hand, many people who sleep with their animals feel a sense of comfort and companionship.

Having their pet with them at night decreases anxiety, makes them feel safe and secure especially when winding down for bed. If you feel like your pet is disrupting your sleep but you still want the sense of security, allow them to sleep in the room – just off the bed!

Did you know?

Nearly 65% of people who have pets allow their animal to sleep in the bed or bedroom with them? Are you one of those people? There are numerous studies that go back and forth on whether having your pet with you is bad, or beneficial. We're here to tell you – it's a personal preference.





Technology in the bedroom.

How often do you fall asleep watching television, or browsing on your phone, tablet or laptop? If you're like most Americans, this kind of device use is probably worked into your nightly sleep routine.

The exposure to light from your devices is interfering with your sleep and you probably don't realize it. Your devices produce high concentrations of blue wavelength light.

Studies show that this artificial blue light can be destructive to your sleep by causing alertness and delaying deep sleep. The wavelengths of light can have numerous effects on your body and exert a strong influence on the body's circadian system.



Ban blue light in the bedroom!



The best thing to do is ban blue light in your bedroom. Avoid using your electronics ONE Hour before bedtime so your brain can prepare itself for a good night sleep. Work this into your nightly routine and it will become easier

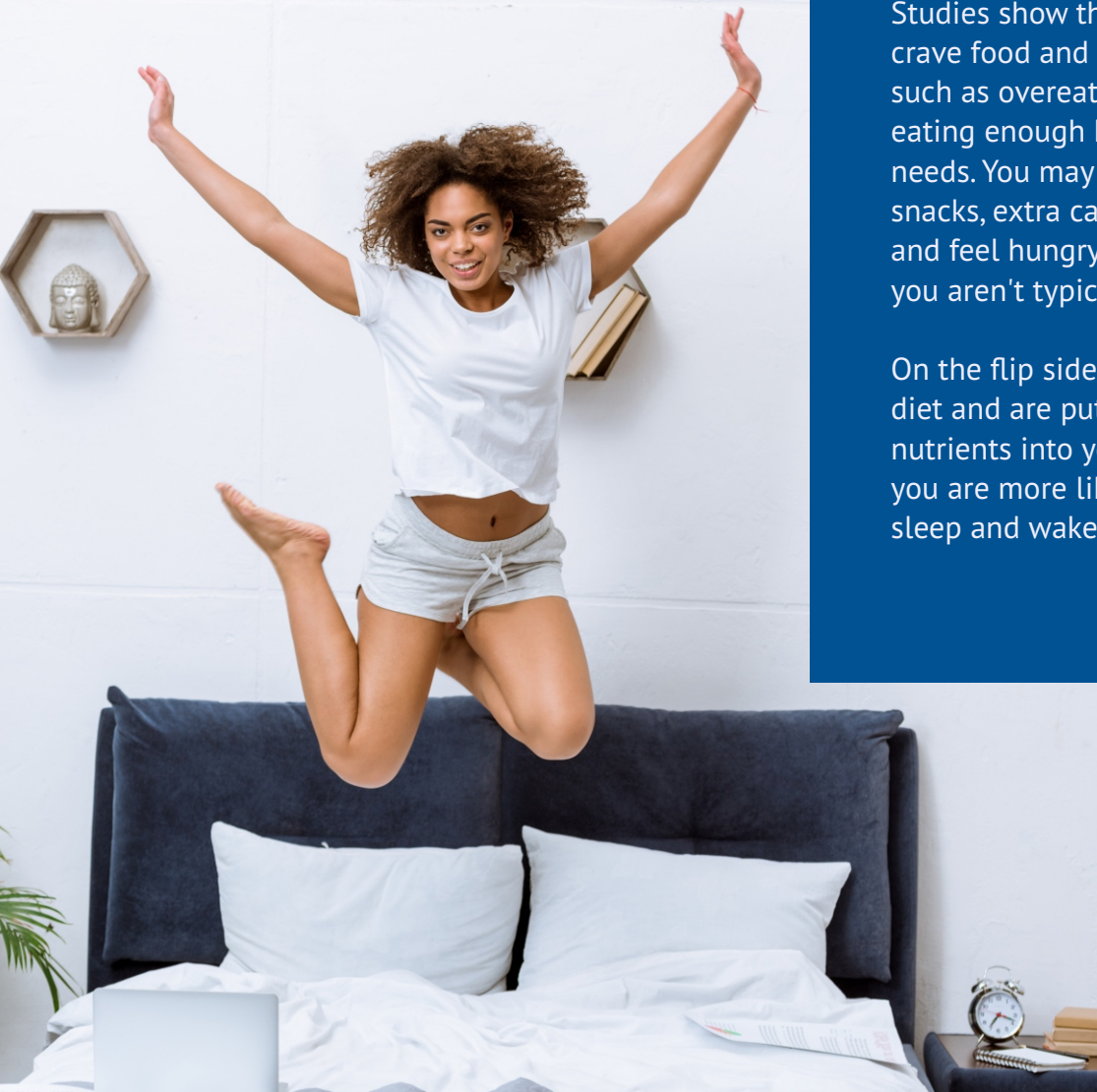
Diet's role in sleep.

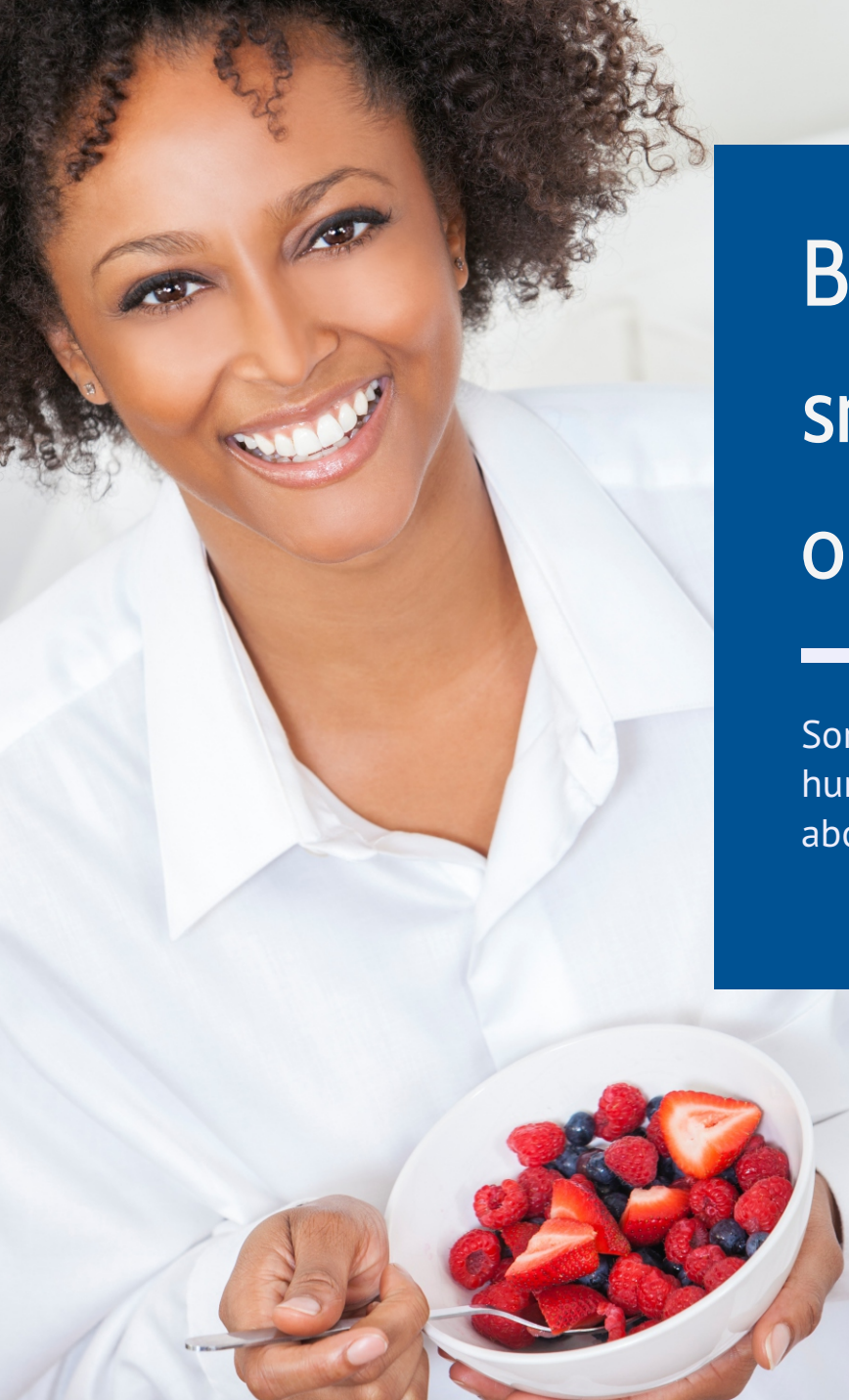


Diet and sleep go hand in hand and are both essential for good health.

Studies show that lack of sleep can make you crave food and can cause bad dietary habits such as overeating the wrong things, and not eating enough key nutrients that your body needs. You may start to eat more late-night snacks, extra carbohydrates and fatty foods, and feel hungry at times during the day that you aren't typically.

On the flip side, if you have a well-balanced diet and are putting the right amount of nutrients into your body that your brain needs you are more likely enter into a great night sleep and wake up feeling better than ever!





Bedtime snack options.

Sometimes, you're just too hungry before bed to even think about sleep!

- Dark Chocolate
- Oatmeal/Cereal
- Almonds
- Whole grain bread and peanut butter
- Hot tea
- Fruit – Kiwi, Cherries, Bananas, berries
- Cottage cheese

While there are several foods to avoid for a better sleep, there are also several that promote a healthy sleep! Foods that contain melatonin, a hormone that regulates your sleep cycle, can help you sleep better. The amino acid tryptophan is found in high protein foods and plays a key role in creating serotonin. Low levels of serotonin can contribute to insomnia.

Here are some bedtime snacks that may leave you feeling sleepy and ready for bed.





Sabotaging your sleep.

The food and drink you put into your body throughout the day certainly have an effect on your sleep, especially what you consume less than 3 hours before falling asleep. If you are eating or drinking the wrong things before bed, you're likely to sabotage your own sleep.

What to Avoid Before Bed

Avoid eating large meals especially spicy or fatty foods before bed can cause indigestion. A large meal may make you uncomfortable as you lay down to sleep. Foods with high sugar and too many carbohydrates are also likely to disrupt your sleep.

Avoid drinking alcohol before bed. Although alcohol may make you drowsy and seem like a relaxing way to wind down an evening, it actually disrupts your sleep. After consuming even small amounts of alcohol, it becomes difficult for your body to enter the deep sleep and REM sleep stages. You end up sleeping lighter and often waking up multiple times during the night, eventually waking up feeling tired and unrefreshed.

Avoid caffeine and nicotine. Both are stimulants and will make it difficult for you to fall asleep and comfortably enter into all of the sleep stages during the night. Also, both drugs stay in your system for a long time so even late afternoon coffee, cola, or tea can make it difficult to fall asleep at your usual bedtime.

Fitness's role in sleep.



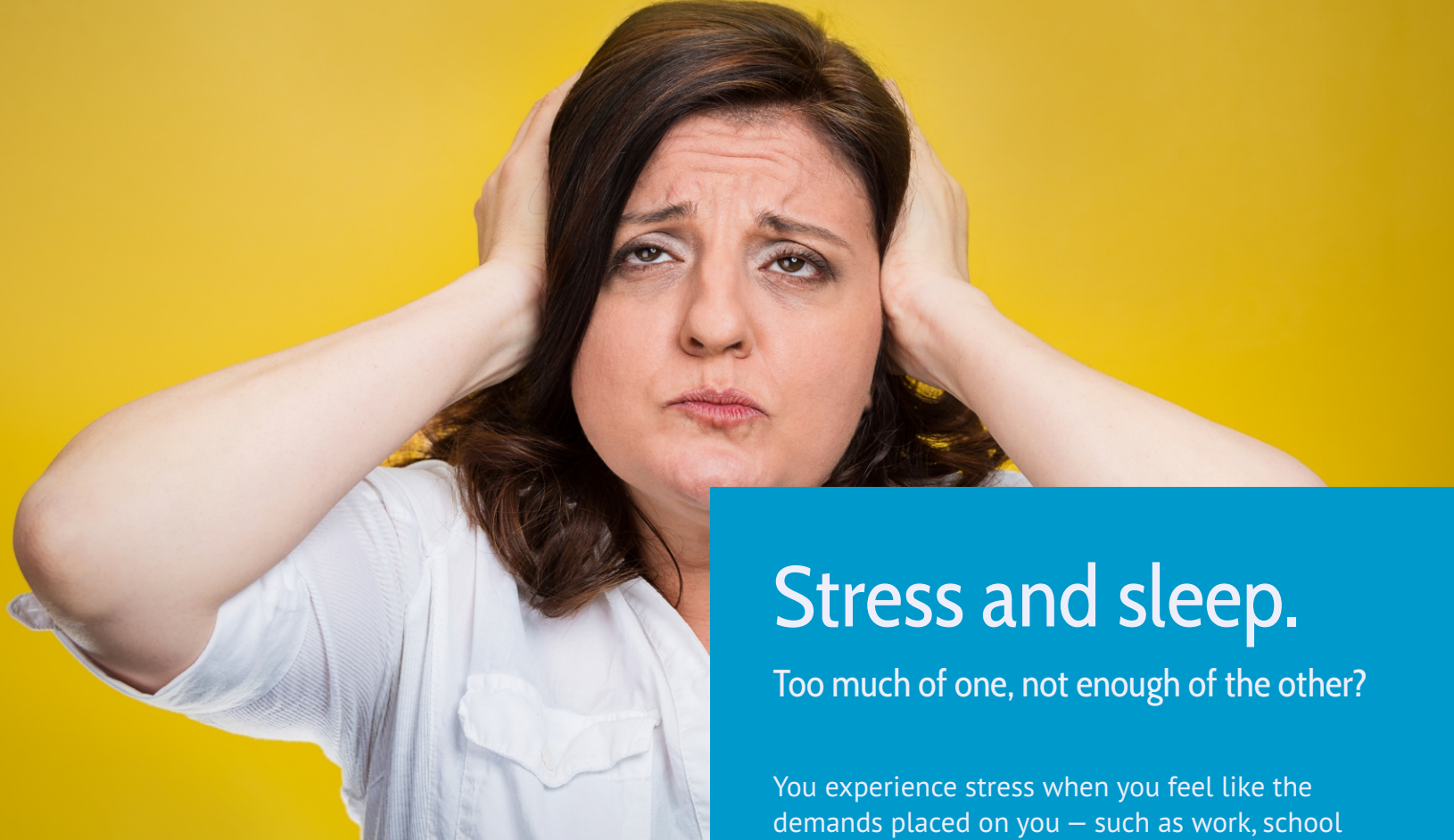
Exercise and sleep tend to go hand in hand with one another. Staying active is great for your overall health and it also promotes a good night's sleep with no interruptions.

Someone who works out regularly may require more sleep than someone who does not. This is because after working out, your body needs time to heal and build muscle, which happens during sleep. Lack of sleep can make it harder for your body to recover by slowing down the production of growth hormone.

A good workout makes it easier to fall asleep at night, and after a good night sleep your body will feel rejuvenated and you'll get the most out of your next workout. In fact, according to a study from The National Sleep Foundation, 83% of vigorous exercisers said they get a good night's sleep, compared to 56% of non-exercisers.

While exercise clearly promotes a good night sleep, be sure to avoid exercising within 3-4 hours of your bedtime. Otherwise, the stimulation from exercise can actually keep you from falling asleep.





Stress and sleep.

Too much of one, not enough of the other?

You experience stress when you feel like the demands placed on you — such as work, school children or relationships — exceed your ability to cope with them. It's hard not to get overwhelmed from time to time with everything most people have on their plate these days.

More often than not, when we are stressed we are not getting the sleep our bodies need. This turns into a stressful and sleepless cycle. The more sleep you miss out on due to stress, the more stress you feel due to lack of energy to complete your already stressful daily demands, and so on.

10 Emergency stress tools to cope with daily stress and get a healthy sleep!

1. Pause, and count to 10 before you speak or react to the situation.
2. Go for quick walk to ease any tension or clear your mind.
3. Listen to your favorite music
4. Take slow, deep breaths
5. Sleep on it and come back to the issue tomorrow.
6. Meditate or pray
7. Walk away from the situation to calm down.
8. Exercise or do a physical activity
9. Pet your animal, or hug/talk to a loved one to feel at ease.
10. Work out or do something active.

A photograph of a bedroom. In the foreground, a bed with a light-colored upholstered frame and wooden legs is covered with a white duvet and pillows. To the left, a window with grey curtains is visible. In the background, a wooden nightstand holds a lamp and some plants. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from the window.

Bedroom Environment.

Creating the perfect sleep setting

Your bedroom should be your sanctuary where you can release all stress from the day and wake up feeling refreshed. All too often we use our bedroom for more than what it is meant for. It's our office, hangout area, game room, television area, closet, etc. Get rid of all those things that distract you from sleep and save this room for the only two things it's meant for, sleep and romance. Now that you have decluttered your sanctuary of the unnecessary, here are some other tips for creating the perfect sleep setting.

Keep it Dark, Quiet and Cool

Light is one of the most important factors when it comes to sleep. The amount of light let in tells our body when to be asleep and when to be awake. Help yourself out! As nighttime approaches either start dimming the lights if you have this feature or start lessening the amount of light by turning off overhead lights and relying on lamps instead. Also, get rid of the electronics! The blue light will also keep your mind up and distracted negatively impacting your sleep. Loud noises can keep you up all night, however lack of some noise can do the same, causing you to focus on the eerie silence instead of falling asleep. Sometime a small fan can help in this situation, as well as keeping you cool. Our bodies naturally drop in temperature as we prepare to fall asleep, so keeping the bedroom somewhere between 65-72 degrees will help with comfort and sleep.

Have calming colors and scents

Choose wall colors that appeal to you, but that also elicit warmth and calm. You may like bright colors, but they can stimulate alertness and can affect your sleep and your dreams. Aromatherapy can be relaxing and help get your mind at ease, ready for sleep. Lavender specifically has shown to decrease heart rate and blood pressure, enabling your body to enter a more relaxing state. Finding a smell that you like preferably like will also work to change your mood and help your mind unwind for bed.



Bedroom Environment.

Keep your bed clean, comfortable and cozy

Make sure your bed and pillows are comfortable. You want to fall into comfort and serenity to help you drift into sleep. Not fall on a hard, lumpy, uncomfortable mattress that keeps you awake from the pain it inflicts on your body. When choosing your bedding pick something natural and breathable, such as cotton, linen, wool, or silk which help to not trap in heat or moisture. It's also important to regularly wash your sheets and comforter. According to the Sleep Foundation, you should try to wash your sheets and pillowcases once a week. Besides, does anything really feel better than sliding into your comfy clean bed, ready to rest after a stressful day?





Travel and sleep.

Whether traveling for fun or traveling for work, it can be very exhausting.

Being outside of your normal sleep habitat is not easy. If you travel across multiple time zones you may have difficulty adjusting; this difficulty is called jet lag. When you experience jet lag your body's circadian rhythms are aligned to the previous time zone you were in. Therefore, your body may want to sleep or be awake at the wrong times.

To avoid jet lag, your best bet is to plan ahead. In the weeks leading up to your trip slowly start adjusting your wake and sleep times as much as your schedule allows to help prepare your body for the new time zones.

Dehydration can also make jet lag more severe, so staying hydrated on the plane while traveling and all throughout your trip is very important.

Don't let
bad sleep
stop you from
exploring the
world!



Sleeps role in work.

Are you performing to the best of your ability at work?

Your lack of sleep can, and will, be detrimental to your work. Sleep deprivation negatively affects your mood, memory, logical reasoning, and ability to concentrate on the very things that help you excel at your job. Medical experts have found that a lack of sleep inhibits your decision-making abilities, which could lead to costly mistakes at work.

A recent study found that the average worker loses over 11 days of productivity every year due to insomnia.



Get back to being your best, keep your job performance up by getting a quality night sleep every night.

The results of a good night versus a bad night's sleep can make all the difference for you AND your team!

A good night sleep makes for a great day of work.



Time to be proactive with your sleep wellness plan.

Learn more about the quality of your sleep, or lack of, with an analysis of eight areas of sleep wellness that is only available through Vitalistics online. While other services look at just one area – like sleep apnea, we feel it's critical to look at your overall sleep wellness. Get started today.

www.vitalistics.com

