JUNE NEWSLETTER

Insomnia

By Claire Pitcher, Registered Nurse

Sleep can affect everything from your mood, to how alert you feel, to how well your body is able to fight off germs. In other words, sleep is really important to a person's general overall health!

Why is sleep so important? During the day, your body and mind are constantly working to process new information, to keep you moving from one spot to another, and to solve problems and challenges that come up. Sleep gives your body and mind the chance to rest and rejuvenate. Sleep is also important for things like moving short-term memories into long-term memory storage!

How much sleep should I get each night? On average, the Canadian Pediatric Society recommends that teens get between 9 to 10 hours of sleep each night. The amount of sleep that a person needs is often based on their age. However, there can be variations from person to person of the same age.

Why do I have trouble falling asleep? There are many reasons a person can have trouble falling asleep at night. For example, if you use your smartphone as an alarm, it can sometimes keep you awake at night if it buzzes when new notifications come in. Smartphones can also confuse your brain because they emit a type of light that can trigger your brain to think it's daytime. Other times things like racing thoughts or worries can keep us up at night.

What is "sleep hygiene"? "Sleep hygiene" is the term used to describe all of the habits a person has related to sleep. If a person is "working on developing healthier sleep hygiene habits", this means they're trying to incorporate new or different strategies into their life to help them sleep better!
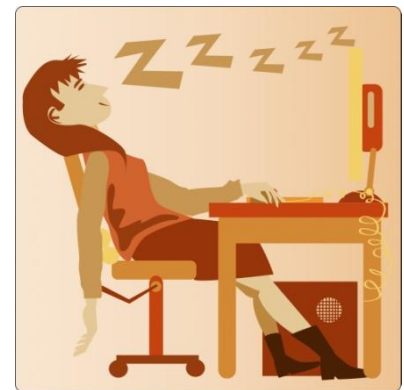
Contest of the Month

1) Sleep contributes to overall good health True or False

2) If you can't fall asleep, you should try watching videos on your phone True or False

3) The amount of sleep a person needs varies from person to person and with age True or False

Email us your answer and you will be entered to win a $10 iTunes or Starbucks gift certificate!

What should I do if I can't sleep? An important thing to consider before answering this question is to ask yourself: "Do I have trouble sleeping once in awhile or more frequently?" Every now and then, a person may have trouble sleeping for a night. This could be caused by anything from having a cup of coffee too late in the day to traveling between time zones and getting jet lagged! On the other hand, if you're regularly having trouble falling or staying asleep, it may be helpful to speak with a health care provider. While sometimes people will occasionally take medicines to help them sleep, there are also many other ways to help you sleep that don't require taking medicine.

What are some tips to promote healthier sleep hygiene?
-Avoid caffeine in the late afternoon/evening
-Charge electronics outside of the bedroom (so you're not be woken up by notifications!)
-Begin to "wind down" 1-2 hours before your actual bedtime. This means no strenuous physical activity, no heated debates, no scary or action-packed movies.
-Limit interruptions while sleeping. Things like turning out the lights, getting rid of distractions, keeping your room at a comfortable temperature will all help you to fall and stay asleep!

Check out this website for more information:
https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/teens_and_sleep

Congratulations Britta!
She was our March
Contest Winner!!

We sent her a
Starbucks Gift card!