Ten Health Benefits Of Getting Your ZZZ's

Our modern, on-the-go world has become dependent on Starbucks, caffeine packed energy drinks, and/or a nicotine fix to make it to a state of functional each and every morning. This is most certainly due to a lack of sleep as many of us are failing to get enough zzz’s. The popular vices of caffeine and nicotine only serve to undermine our health when instead a good night’s sleep is usually all we need.

In the United States there are 50-70 million people who suffer from chronic sleep and wakefulness disorders [1]. The National Sleep Foundation states that adults need between 7-9 hours of sleep each night to stay in good health [2]. Getting the proper amount of sleep can do wonders for your health. Here’s 10 health benefits of getting the proper amount of sleep.

1) Sleep and Hypertension
- Individuals who get between 6-7 hours of sleep per night had a 19% increased risk of suffering from hypertension compared to those who got between 7-8 hours per night. The odds were even worse for those who got less than 6 hours of sleep per night. They had a 66% increased risk of suffering from high blood pressure [3]. Get enough sleep and your blood pressure will thank you.

2) Sleep and the Incidence of Diabetes
- Chronic sleep loss has been shown to increase the incidence of type 2 diabetes [4]. Individuals who get an adequate amount of sleep are less likely to experience glucose metabolism deficiencies and insulin resistance compared to those who are chronically sleep deprived.

3) Sleep and Obesity
- Getting an average of 9 or more hours of sleep per night was associated with a lower risk of obesity compared to getting less than or equal to 6 hours a night according to a study looking at over 1,700
4) Sleep and Cancer
- Studies have shown that both breast and prostate cancer risk can be reduced by sleeping longer [6,7]. Men and women who slept an average of 9 or more hours per night had a much lower incidence of developing breast or prostate cancer. The study looking at the association between sleep and breast cancer stated that increased melatonin levels in longer sleepers may be the reason for this.

5) Sleep and Memory
- Getting proper amounts of sleep can increase memory consolidation as it helps your brain remember better [8]. Declarative memories (facts and knowledge) are retained in slow wave sleep which is commonly referred to as deep sleep. Procedural (learning how to do things) and emotional memory are retained during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep.

6) Sleep and Performance
- Sleep deprivation has been shown to decrease the performance of skills such as reaction time, hand-eye coordination, and accuracy readings [9]. These decreases were similar or even greater than those individuals who experienced the same effects from a blood alcohol level of 0.05%.

7) Sleep and Depression/Anxiety
- A study of elderly population found that those individuals who obtained the proper amount of sleep were less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety [10]. Elderly subjects who slept less than 6 hours per night or more than 9 hours per night had the highest incidences of depression and anxiety.

8) Sleep and Cellular DNA Health
- Animal studies show the crucial importance of getting enough sleep in maintaining healthy DNA composition. Animals who experienced both short and long term sleep deprivation showed genetic damage in both their blood and brain cells compared to those animals with no sleep deprivation [11].

9) Sleep and Headaches
- Sleep disorders have been shown to have an increased correlation with the frequency and severity of headaches [12]. People who suffer from migraines can actually resolve their headache by lying down in a quiet, dark room and falling asleep. As little as 2.5 hours of sleep has been shown to alleviate migraine headaches in some individuals [13].

10) Sleep and Stress
- Noise disturbances causing an interruption in deep sleep have been linked to an increase in stress hormones being released by the body causing a deformation in the body’s natural circadian rhythms which are essential to a healthy sleeping pattern [14]. This leads to less recovery time for the body and decreased performance capacity, drowsiness, and tiredness throughout the day.

Get your zzz’s! Make it a point to develop consistent healthy sleeping habits and you’ll see the benefits almost immediately while improving your long term health at the same time. Visit my website for more tips and advice on sleep and overall health.
Adopting a healthy lifestyle can be a new and interesting experience. Many new diets popping up promising instant weight loss and grand successes that it’s hard to really know which ones to choose. Beans, Beans, The Musical Fruit is a book that I’ve been reading on the science and health benefits of plant-based diets. This kind of information is important because many chronic diseases (heart disease, obesity, diabetes, cancer, and more), giving you the facts on foods versus medications in treating these medical conditions. The book also contains an easy-to-follow guide on how to adopt a whole foods, plant-based diet as a part of an overall lifestyle change, producing the best possible health outcomes for you and your family. Hurry and get your copy today!

We’d love for you to join us in spreading the good word about plant-based nutrition and lifestyle medicine by telling your family and friends about our website at www.PlantBasedPharmacist.com.

Share and rate this post below or tell us what you think by posting a comment. Thank you again for stopping by and until next time... be happy, be healthy, and live the life you’ve always dreamed of!

by Dustin Rudolph, PharmD
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References:

1 COMMENT:

Anonymous October 27, 2011 at 9:59 PM

Don’t forget the constant bombardment of commercials and electronic devices that add to us being too stimulated which cause us to have unhealthy sleeping habits.

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It seems nearly impossible for many, especially when it comes to eating habits: I don’t have time; It’s to...

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In the United States, essential health benefits (EHBs) are a set of ten benefits, defined under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010, that must be covered by individually-purchased health insurance and plans in small-group markets both inside and outside of health insurance marketplaces. Large-group health plans, self-insured ERISA plans, and ERISA-governed multi-employer welfare arrangements that are not subject to state insurance law are exempted from the requirement.

Users can get the following health benefits of cannabis: Relief of chronic pain. There are hundreds of chemical compounds in cannabis, many of which are cannabinoids. One of the biggest medical benefits of cannabis is its link to fighting cancer. There is a good amount of evidence that shows cannabinoids can help fight cancer or at least certain types of it.

Helps treat depression. See additional information.

In what can seem like an oversexed society, it behooves all of us to pay attention to this highly personal but important topic. While the list provided here by no means are whole grains healthy. But why? Here’s the real deal on why they’re good for you. "You’re getting fiber, a healthy plant-based protein, vitamins, minerals, and a variety of phytochemicals that will improve your health," says Lilian Cheung, DSc, RD, a lecturer in nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health. So read on to find out what exactly is considered a whole grain, how to find them, and why you should eat them.