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**2018 10.02 Health Matters**

**Getting Enough Sleep?**

**Joseph**

**This is Health Matters, discussing sleep deprivation.**

**Michael**

**A survey of primary care practitioners found that about one third of their office-visit patients mention moderate to severe fatigue. One/third is a significantportion. Is this due to sleep deprivation?**

**A study reported in the Archives of Internal Medicine looked at 1,000 patients who complained of fatigue. Two-thirds of the cases were associated with disease. Namely, anemia, heart disease, diabetes, lung disease or rheumatoid arthritis. So, what’s going on with the other third? Why do healthy people feel tired all the time?**

**Joseph**

**A physician working with *Consumer Reports onHealth*writes that one simple question canhelp determine the cause of fatigue. Was the onset of fatigue sudden or gradual?If it was sudden, the cause is usually physical. If it came on slowly, there is probably an emotional component.**

**Michael**

**There’s another useful question. Do you feel better after a good night’s sleep? And that question leads to a prominent reality of modern life – sleep deprivation. While 7 to 8 hours of sleep is considered basic to good health, more than 1/3 of the adult population fails to get their nightly dose. Worse, a*Preventive Medicine* survey found that two-thirds of the teenage population do not get 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night. At the same time, doctors are seeing teens with fatigue and falling asleep issues.**

**Joseph**

**Last week the NY Times reported that children have higher scores on mental ability tests when they have 9 to 11 hours sleep, no less than 60 minutes of physical exercise and no more than 2 hours a day of recreational screen time. Every day,**

**Michael**

**Lifestyle habits have a significant impact on how well or poorly you sleep – at any age. Very important is what you do around bedtime. For example, do you fall asleep in front of the tv? Do you work on your laptop in bed? Do you use products that help you sleep? Sleep aids may knock you out for a night, but used habitually they interfere with the body clock that regulates sleep.**

**Joseph**

**Goodsleep habits can cure fatigue. An obvious good habit is to avoid caffeine after mid-day -- coffee, tea, chocolate, energy drinks, etc.Another is being active every day. Exercise is an important factor in priming the body clock for sleep. Butvigorous exercise late in the day releases hormones that can interfere with sleep.**

**Michael**

**A surprising recommendation for increasing your sleep time is to get enough natural light during the day. The more the better. Natural light stimulates the production of melatonin, a neurotransmitter involved in regulating sleep. Getting lots of natural light every day is as important as exercising.**

**Joe**

**Another surprising recommendation is to use your bed for sleeping only. Apparently watching tv, talking on the phone, studying or doing other work in bed is counterproductive to falling asleep naturally.**

**Michael**

**That ties in with another recommended habit for healthy sleep time – cultivating a relaxing bedtime routine. This can include going to bed at the same time every night and having a light snack before you do.**

**There’s a myth that you need less sleep as you age. This is simply not true. You still need 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night. However, as you age your shifting hormones can alter sleep patterns. As can certain medications and some medical conditions.**

**Joseph**

**That brings up the problem of nighttime awakenings. Some people fall asleep without difficulty but then wake up and stay awake. This may be caused bya disorder known as sleep apnea, which has a cluster of symptoms: snoring, gasping during sleep, waking up in a sweat or waking up with a headache. These symptoms warrant a visit to the doctor.**

**Michael**

**But the usual causes of waking up in the middle of the night are simple enough to control. Drinking alcohol just before bedtime is almost a guarantee you’ll wake up. As is late night tv or computer browsing. In the case of drinking, the sugar in the alcohol finds its way to the brain and wakes it up. In the case of tv and computer just before bedtime, it’s those rays from screen to brain that can interrupt your sleep.**

**Joseph**

**Health Matters is a production of KIDE Hoopa CA.  Produced and written by Cynthia Poten. Engineered by Michael Heminger.  Our readers were Coty Yarbrough, Michael Heminger and Joseph Orozco.  For this audio and more information, visit our download area at  www.kidefm.org. Thank you for listening. Your health adds to the health of our community.**

**Sources and Links**

[**https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2528817/**](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2528817/)

[**https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/melatonin-and-sleep**](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/melatonin-and-sleep)

[**www.nytimes.com/2018/09/26/well/mind/kids-brainpower-tied-to-exercise-sleep-and-limited-screen-time.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fhealth&action=click&contentCollection=health&region=stream&module=stream\_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=sectionfront**](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/26/well/mind/kids-brainpower-tied-to-exercise-sleep-and-limited-screen-time.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fhealth&action=click&contentCollection=health&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=sectionfront)

***The Best of Health* by Consumer Reports, 2016, Yonkers, NY**