

Five Minutes to Thrive

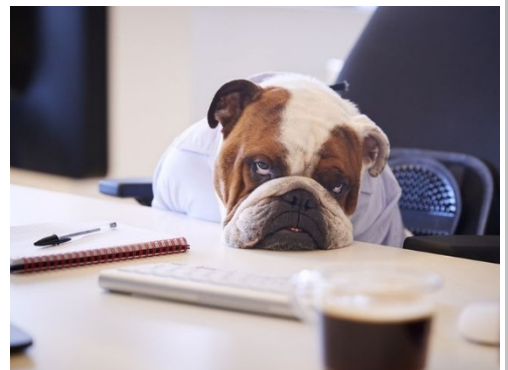
Sleep During Quarantine

This week, we're focusing on one of the most common factors impacting overall mental health...sleep. Poor sleep affects personal and social relationships, work and academic productivity, and it impairs sound decision-making. Anxiety surrounding COVID-19 is just one of many examples of factors that can make for a bad night of sleep. The use of screens before bedtime is a far more common factor in lost sleep – sometimes up to 2-3 hours!

Fortunately, bad habits are usually the biggest culprits when it comes to lost or poor quality sleep. Try using the easy tips below as a part of your pre-bedtime routine and reprogram your brain to improve the quality and quantity of your sleep. Sleep specialists generally recommend practicing a sleep hygiene routine for 2-6 weeks to notice an improvement in your sleep quality and quantity. If your persistent efforts don't pay off, it may be time to visit with your PCM; chronically poor sleep is attributable to a variety of conditions and can have serious implications for your overall health & wellbeing.

The “Ten Commandments” of good sleep hygiene for adults:

1. Fix a bedtime and a waking time and do not deviate, not even on weekends!
2. Cut back on naps. If you do nap, no more than 30 minutes
3. Avoid excessive alcohol ingestion four hours before bedtime, and do not smoke
4. Avoid caffeine six hours before bedtime. This includes coffee, tea and sodas, and chocolate
5. Avoid heavy, spicy, or sugary foods four hours before bedtime. A light snack before bed is acceptable
6. Exercise regularly, but not right before bed
7. Make sure that your bed is a comfortable place for sleeping
8. Find a comfortable temperature setting for sleeping and keep the room well ventilated
9. Block out all distracting noise and eliminate as much light as possible
10. Reserve the bed for sleep and sex. Do not use the bed as an office, work or recreation room



The “Ten Commandments” of sleep hygiene for kids & teens:

1. Set age-appropriate bedtimes for kids (preferably before 9:00 pm)
2. Keep a consistent bedtime and wake time on weekdays and weekends
3. Establish a consistent bedtime routine and recommend wearing comfortable clothes in bed, including strong absorbing diapers for infants
4. Encourage children to fall asleep independently
5. Avoid bright lights at bedtime and during the night, and increase exposure to natural light in the morning
6. Keep all electronics, including televisions, computers, and cell phones, out of the bedroom and limit use of electronics before bedtime
7. Maintain a regular daily schedule, including consistent mealtimes
8. Have an age-appropriate nap schedule
9. Ensure plenty of exercise and time spent outdoors during the day
10. Eliminate foods and beverages containing caffeine and lots of sugar, candies and chocolate, soda, coffee and tea

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