Sleep Well, PSU

How to get better sleep

Blue Light
Did you know, the light given off by phones, computers, tvs, etc. is called blue light? This light delays your body’s internal clock, your body’s ability to make melatonin, which is your sleep inducing hormone. By turning off your electronics before bedtime (even just 30 minutes), will help you fall asleep faster and stay asleep.

Caffeine
Caffeine is a stimulant, which is why many of us drink beverages with it. However, it can make it hard for us to fall asleep. Quick tip: avoid any stimulants (nicotine included) before bed. Another thing to note, while alcohol helps you fall asleep quickly, it can lead to disruptive sleep in the second half of your sleep time.

Napping
A nap can help improve your mood and alertness, but try to limit it to just 20 – 30 minutes a day. Too much of a good thing (napping) can lead to you not sleeping well when it is time to lay your head down for a long, restful sleep.

Quiet and Comfortable
So what does that mean? Ideally your room should be quiet, between 60 and 67 degrees, and dark. If you don’t have a dark and quiet sleeping environment, consider using an eye mask, ear plugs, or a white noise machine to help.

Why Is Sleep Important?

Sleep helps you do better on exams
One of the things sleep does for us is it allows our brains to process the information we have taken in throughout the day. During sleep, short-term memories are transferred to stronger long-term memories. So if you are thinking about staying up just a couple extra hours to cram for an exam, consider differently. The studying you have already completed needs sleep in order to have a better chance of being retained and recalled the next day.

Body Repair
This is the time that many of your body’s systems slow down (breathing, heart rate) in order to give them rest and repair. During sleep your body repairs itself. If you workout hard, sleep will help your muscles recover. Sleep also helps strengthen you immune system, keeping you well.

Sleep is good for your hormones?
Growth hormones increase during sleep. This is the time your hair and nails grow the fastest and why sometimes it feels like kiddos “grow overnight”, because they do!

Other hormones go down while you are sleeping. Cortisol, which is your stress hormone, tends to go down while you are sleeping. When you are having a bad day has anyone ever told you, “Go to sleep and you will feel better in the morning”? You actually do feel better in the morning because you stress hormone has had a chance to revert to closer to “normal” levels.

References
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