

REST~The Key to Restoration and Healthy Living

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The average healthy individual sleeps one-third of their lives. The key phrase is: "healthy individual," yet sleep disturbances are all too common leading to fatigue, suboptimal performance and significant medical and psychological disturbances. Scientists and researchers do not yet fully understand the details of why and how sleep is so important to staying healthy. However the evidence is clear that adequate quality and quantity of "rest" is critical for both daily physical and mental restoration. It is no surprise that the first 4 letters of the word restoration is "rest."

The Problem

Insomnia, the inability to either get to sleep or stay asleep is the most common of all sleep disorders. In North America, the cost of insomnia including treatment, related accidents and lost productivity exceeds \$100 billion per year.ⁱⁱ Regardless of the country or continent, the effects of sleep deprivation for any reason are a costly health concern to both big business and individuals alike. It is important to remember that on a daily basis your body endures wear and tear and unless you have adequate sleep to allow the restoration to occur the cumulative health deficits can mount into significantly diminished health and overt disease.

Insomnia can be present as impairment of depth, restful quality or depth of sleep resulting from one or more of the following symptoms:

- Early morning waking
- Difficulty staying asleep
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Unrefreshing sleep

During a given year approximately 35 percent of the adult population will experience insomnia.ⁱⁱⁱ Of these afflicted sleepless individuals upwards of 7 percent will categorize their insomnia as either chronic and/or severe.^{iv}

The Goal

Researchers have concluded that most adults can reasonably function with 6.5 to 8 hours of sleep daily in a single sleep session.^v It should be noted that this range reflects the minimum amount of sleep needed and that some individuals will need more on a routine basis

or during times of stress, illness or other times in their life. It is essential to listen to your body and not to fight the inclination to rest. Experts agree that a rested body is a more efficient body hence it is imperative to take time to get adequate rest to augment your efficiency and to protect health. After all with all the success in the world, without health the victory is empty.

The Solution

There are 2 basic approaches to helping restore restful sleep and eliminate insomnia.

- Drug Therapy Prescription and Over the Counter (OTC)
- Non-Drug Natural Therapies

Drug Therapies Include:

Numerous drugs have been used to in the battle against insomnia with varying degrees of success. Noteworthy is that use of a drug short or long term fails to address the underlying cause of why insomnia, merely a symptom of sleep disturbance has presented itself. Indeed few experts actually believe that a drug-deficiency with insomnia exists.

Benzodiazepines are the most commonly prescribed conventional medication for insomnia. Side effects include anterograde amnesia and daytime residual sleepiness.^{vi}

Tricyclic Antidepressants are prescribed at doses lower than those typically used to treat depression. Side effects include dry mouth, constipation, urine retention, sexual dysfunction and low blood pressure.^{vii}

Antihistamines are present in many over the counter non-prescription insomnia formulas. These formulas are only minimally effective according to researchers and can also lessen sleep quality.^{viii}

There can be argued that there is a time and place for all therapies and indeed this may be true, yet from a philosophical perspective addressing the underling cause for insomnia is essential. Otherwise one may compare the use of insomnia drug therapy as a first line of defense versus turning down the volume on the stereo system.

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