



IMPORTANCE OF REST, SLEEP AND EXERCISE

INTRODUCTION

Hectic schedule has become a part of our day to day lifestyle. Most of the activities include sedentary style of work thus leading to different kind of diseases. People are so much involved in their hectic work that we have almost forgotten to rest and exercise. Human body naturally needs ample amount of rest, sleep and exercise for the proper and better functioning of the body mechanism. Without these the human body will suffer from fatigue, stress, depression, obesity and all other kinds of cardio-vascular related diseases. Thus, to lead a healthy lifestyle in today's sedentary style of living importance of rest, sleep and exercise must be practiced in a proper manner.

IMPORTANCE OF REST:

Rest is an important part of a healthy lifestyle for all ages. It rejuvenates the body and mind, regulates the mood, and is linked to learning and memory function. On the other hand, not getting enough rest can negatively affect the mood, immune system, memory, and stress level.

What is adequate rest?

Growing evidence shows that chronic lack of sleep increases the risk for developing obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, infections, cognitive difficulties, and mood problems. Those who get 7 to 8 hours sleep per night live significantly longer than those who get less. This gives a good clue to how much sleep we need. Sleep requirements seem to vary somewhat among people, but everyone should wake up fresh and feel rested during the day, not tired. Children need 9 to 10 hours and teens need 8 to 9 hours because their body and brain are still growing. Some adults also seem to feel and function best if they regularly get 8 to 9 hours sleep.

Why rest is important for our health

During the day the body's metabolism is in a state of actively coping with the many demands made upon it that often results in physical, mental, and emotional strain. This state is called catabolism. The body is breaking down stored energy and reserves to meet demands. At night when the body is resting, another form of metabolism takes place called anabolism. This involves repairing damaged tissues, strengthening the body, and building up health and energy reserves. Some of this restoration occurs during the day as well, but some repair and does not build tissues building only during sleep.

If sleep is inadequate, the body does not have the time it needs for repairing and building back health reserves. Eventually the body becomes exhausted, fatigue sets in, and health and quality of life are seriously impaired.

Relaxation and other therapies

Relaxation can help overcome the tension and anxiety often felt as a consequence of insomnia. Those experiencing disturbed sleep have trouble unwinding sufficiently to get a good night's rest, and for many, excessive mental activity and racing thoughts prevent them from getting off to sleep, or wake them up frequently or too early. Therefore it is important to know how to relax properly.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) can help resolve our sleep problems. CBT is a programme of psychological treatment that when applied towards sleep can correct mistaken ideas and negative thoughts that can cause sleeplessness, and make it worse. It actually treats the cause of the insomnia – and not just the symptoms, and can help by changing negative thoughts about sleep, and learning more accurate information in order to replace the negative thoughts with more positive thoughts and beliefs.

The most common forms of CBT are: Stimulus Control, Sleep Restriction and Sleep Hygiene.

Relaxation and Breathing

Stressful lifestyles, working late, and watching intense television shows or the news, are some of the factors that can contribute to the mind racing and being unable to wind down. It is important to know the importance of being relaxed before bed, and to have the knowledge of effective relaxation techniques to apply in order to experience deep, restful sleep.

Relaxing the Body

This can be done in bed and works by relaxing separate groups of muscles. It is also effective to visualize each set of muscles being relaxed as one goes through the exercise:

1. Tense a muscle by contracting and flexing for 7-10 seconds. Do not strain the muscle.
2. Visualize the muscle being tensed and feel the built up tension
3. Release each muscle abruptly, and then relax, allowing the body to relax before going on to the next muscle.
4. Keep other muscles relaxed whilst working on a particular muscle.

Breathing:

The effects of deep breathing are largely psychological but it can bring about a physiological response in the body. It can normalize the heart and respiration rate and calm the individual.

Exercise:

As well as relaxing before bed, breathing exercise can be used whenever anything upsetting happens, and before one reacts. It can be done anywhere because we do not have to lie on our back:

1. Sit up with the back straight and place the tip of tongue just behind the upper front teeth, and keep it there throughout the entire exercise.
2. Practice exhaling with the tongue in this position.
3. Now close the mouth and inhale through the nose for 4 seconds.
4. Hold the breath for 7 seconds then exhale through mouth, taking 8 seconds to exhale completely.
5. Repeat 3-4 times and try to be accurate with the counting.
6. Do this every evening before bed.

IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Sleep is essential for a person's health and wellbeing. Adequate sleep is a central part of a healthy lifestyle. During sleep, the body and the brain actively work to support healthy brain and body function. Memory is improved with sleep. Sleeping seems to enhance learning as if it were extra practice. Sleep is also vital for the child's physical health. As one example, sleeping well supports the immune system, which helps to fight infections, and thus sleep may decrease the risk of getting sick. While we sleep, our body and mind remain at work as many important processes take place. For instance, short- term memories are converted into long term- memories in a process called memory consolidation. Sleep also helps our body physically restore itself. During sleep our body's growth hormone production reaches its peak. This hormone speeds the absorption of nutrients and amino acids into our cells and aids the healing of tissues throughout our body. Growth hormone also stimulates our bone marrow.

Lack of sleep can contribute towards many health problems. The risks for heart disease and type 2 diabetes are also high, and there's a growing body of evidence showing that poor sleep patterns is directly linked to overweight and obesity. There are a number of reasons for this, including low serotonin

and consequently melatonin levels, which make us more likely to eat more sugary foods and refined carbohydrates because these foods increase levels of serotonin. Lack of sleep has also been shown to increase levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin, that stimulates appetite and makes us feel hungry, and it decreases levels of the satiety hormone leptin, which gives us that satisfied feeling after eating that prompts us to stop eating. Furthermore being tired in itself can also lead to overeating because sometimes we eat in the belief that we need food to supply the energy we lack.

On average most adults seem to need around 7-8 hours sleep per night though this can vary from person to person. As we grow older our sleep patterns change and as we go through our life stages we tend to get less and less sleep. Older adults tend to sleep less, not because they need less sleep, but because we are more likely to experience disturbed sleep as we grow older. Women are more likely to experience insomnia and sleep disturbances than men. Insomnia is simply being awake when we want to be asleep.

Importance of sleep to child's health

Children need their sleep. Infants will usually require a sleep in the morning and afternoon, while toddlers and preschoolers usually nap in the afternoon. Even older preschoolers and kindergarten children need to have a quiet time after lunch, looking at a book or hugging a special doll or teddy bear. Sleep affects how children feel and function. By helping the child to get the recommended amount of sleep, we can improve the child's health, psychological well-being, and safety. Sleep is key to our child's growth and development as well as his/her ability to learn. The child's need for sleep changes with age. There may be individual differences between children but the basic requirements are as follows-

- i. Preschool aged children need to sleep 10-12 hours.
- ii. School-aged children needs at least 9 hours.
- iii. Adolescents need 9 hours.
- iv. Adults need 7-8 hours

Consequences of sleep loss

Sleep deprivation suppresses immune function, making more susceptible to bacteria and viruses. Chronic sleep deprivation puts us at a greater risk for a number of health problems, including-

1. Obesity
2. Hypertension
3. Heart disease
4. Mood disorder

IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE

Good physical conditioning of the body is very important. All of us cannot be athletic champions but all of us can improve the functioning of our heart, lungs and muscles. Physical conditioning can be achieved with little or no exercise equipment. All that is required is a little time each day and a great deal of determination and patience. Regular exercise causes the heart-beat to grow stronger and steadier, and breathing to become deeper. As the flow of blood through the tissues is improved, waste products of the cells are removed more effectively; the body uses energy more efficiently in both physical and mental tasks and coordination is improved.

Physically active people are less likely to get heart attacks and other forms of cardiovascular diseases than sedentary people. Exercise should be something that one enjoys doing. One of the most practical and enjoyable exercises is walking. Walking is as natural to the human body as breathing. In it, all the foot, leg and hip muscles, and much of the back muscles are involved. The abdominal muscles tend to contract and support their share of the weight, and the diaphragm and rib muscles increase their action. The arm and shoulder muscles move automatically. The shoulder and neck muscles get into play as the head is held erect, and the eye muscles are exercised as a person look around him.

Benefits of Exercise

1. Exercise controls weight

Exercise can help prevent excess weight gain or help maintain weight loss. When a person is engaged in physical activity, it can burn calories. The more intense the activity, the more calories can be burned.

2. Exercise combats health conditions and diseases

In fact, regular physical activity can help to prevent or manage a wide range of health problems and concerns, including stroke, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, depression, certain types of cancer, arthritis and falls.

3. Exercise improves mood

Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave the person happier and more relaxed. Exercise may also make the person feel better about the appearance of a person. When a person exercises regularly, it can boost the confidence and improve the self-esteem.

4. Exercise boosts energy

Regular physical activity can improve the muscle strength and boost the endurance. Exercise and physical activity deliver oxygen and nutrients to the tissues and help the cardiovascular system work more efficiently. Exercises can also enhance the heart and lungs to work more efficiently.

5. Exercise promotes better sleep

Regular physical activity can help the person fall asleep faster and deepen the sleep. But it is not advisable to exercise too close to bedtime, or ones may be too energized to fall asleep.

6. Exercise puts the spark back into the sex life

Regular physical activity can leave the feeling energized and looking better, which may have a positive effect on the sex life. But there's more to it than that. Regular physical activity can lead to enhanced arousal for women. And men who exercise regularly are less likely to have problems with erectile dysfunction than those men who do not exercise.

7. Exercise can be fun

Exercise and physical activity can be a fun way to spend some time. It gives one a chance to unwind, enjoy the outdoors or simply engage in activities that make him happy. Physical activity can also help one connect with family or friends in a fun social setting. So, take a dance class, hit the hiking trails or join a soccer team. Therefore, find a physical activity that enjoy, and just do it.

CONCLUSION

Rest, sleep and exercises are all collectively an important part of a healthy lifestyle for all ages. They can rejuvenate the body and mind, regulates the mood, and is linked to learning and memory function. Enough rest boosts up the immune system and lowers the stress levels thus contributing to a healthy living.