

Weekend Sleep-Ins Can't Counter Sleep Deprivation *by Wesley Vaughn, MD*

From improved skin to heart health, the importance of sleep cannot be overlooked as an essential tool to overall health and quality of life. Unfortunately, sleep deprivation has become commonplace in today's ever busier culture. Often times the first thing that is compromised in a busy person's schedule is sleep. The result is less sleep over a prolonged period of time or extended wake cycles which encroach on a regenerative period of needed rest.

The amount and quality of sleep that a person gets each night has such a large impact on the way the body handles the stressors of the next day. Thus, one's lack of sleep may become a vicious cycle that greatly impacts your health. Major concerns with sleep deprivation are diminished cognitive

function, reductions in emotional and physiological responses, slower healing response by the body, obesity, increased risk for diabetes, a reduction of a properly functioning immune system, and reductions of work performance.

In order to stave off the ill effects of sleep, most adults need seven to eight hours of sleep each night. Many of us are under the false impression that sleeping more on the weekend or napping will make up for a nightly loss of sleep. This is simply not the case due to shorter sleep cycles and a different type of sleep obtained through a short sleep cycle. Additionally sleeping more on the weekend can actually cause the body's natural sleep cycle to go out of balance.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to make up for sleep lost for a prolonged period of time. This loss of sleep is called sleep debt. This cycle is exacerbated by people who work night shifts or have changing schedules.

Trying to keep a regular sleep schedule is one of the most important tools to getting adequate sleep. People should try to maintain the same sleep cycle throughout the week. Also certain activities should be avoided before bedtime. These include the consumption of alcohol, nicotine, or large meals or any caffeine eight hours prior to sleep. If you are getting an adequate eight hours of sleep but still feel tired you should consult your physician as this may indicate that you have a sleep disorder or an underlying medical condition.

Happy Thanksgiving & Holiday Hours

As scientific studies from Harvard to the University of California are showing, cultivating gratitude can result in very real physical and emotional benefits like reduced stress and enhanced immune system function. Even without those perks, every one of us at Thunderbird Internal Medicine is grateful for YOU and your trust in our care.

We hope you have a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday. Should you need us that weekend, please know that our offices will be closed on Thursday, November 27th but we will see patients on an urgent care basis on Friday the 28th at our Glendale suite #F-1 location.



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