



The Importance Of Sleep *Part 3*

Your lifestyle can have a positive or negative effect on your sleep. Think about what you eat and drink.

- Try to eat a plant-based whole food organic diet. This will help you avoid processed sugars and toxic chemicals which negatively alter metabolism and can rob you of sleep
- Try to limit caffeine, especially later in the afternoon. You'll find once you spend a few weeks repairing your sleep you won't need that afternoon pick-me-up.
- Limit alcohol, but if you do drink with dinner or with an evening event, try to keep it to a moderate level of consumption and always consume alcohol with water. A good rule is 12 oz of water per drink. For me, two beers or two glasses of wine, equals an additional 24 oz of water. Drinking water will help reduce dehydration, flush out toxic metabolites, and protect against the negative affects of alcohol on your sleep cycle.
- Regular exercise will help stabilize your mood and decompress your mind in order to improve your sleep. The drop in body temperature which occurs many hours after exercise will also help you feel drowsy. Exercise improves the biochemical functions of your cells and will assist your sleep metabolism in performing its regenerative functions more efficiently. People who exercise regularly spend more time in deep sleep and experience longer duration sleep— in short: people who exercise get better sleep.
- Your mindset when you are just waking up can set the tone for your entire day. Try to take a few minutes as you are getting ready to get up to think about the things you are thankful for and give yourself permission to accept the challenges of the day ahead of you.
- Lack of sleep has a profound impact on your brain. If you don't get enough sleep your cognitive function is reduced, your ability to learn is impaired, your memories don't get stored in a way you can access them when you need them, and you have slower reaction times.
- Chronic lack of sleep increase your risk of developing neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease.

How do you evaluate your sleep health after you make these changes?

After a few days you should begin to feel more rested and have higher levels of energy throughout the day. You'll notice you don't need that 4 pm cup of coffee anymore. You may also notice your anxiety levels reducing and your workout routine and muscle recovery improving. Deeper emotional reserve and improved memory and executive function, problem solving, and creative thinking are major milestones in the sleep recovery journey.

With the advent of wearable technologies, you now have the ability to take a deep dive into your sleep patterns. Many smart watches have sleep trackers and there are many apps available which can measure the duration and even the quality of your sleep. These programs are great because they give you visible and immediate feedback.

Sleep is as important to your body as water or oxygen. Without it, your body and mind cannot function at their full potential. Invest time in improving your sleep. It's easy, inexpensive and has enormous health benefits. Getting an appropriate amount of sleep protects against a wide spectrum of diseases and has the potential to prolong your life.

Farming Secrets says: You Sleep As You Live

Ref: By Dr. Zach Bush & Dr. Peter Cummings