

Natural Healing Express Weekly

Column 338 How to Get Healthy Sleep

Funny thing is, by many barometers, getting a good night's sleep is suggested to be 7 to 8 hours. And, to the at least 7 hours, I have a strong tendency to agree. However, anything upwards of that, in my humble opinion is dependent upon bio-individuality. This means, each person is unique and their sleep needs are unique. That is why it is key to find sleep habits that are HEALTHY for your specific and individual needs. First of all, it is important to understand circadian rhythm. Sleep, body temperature and alertness are all part of your body's daily rhythm which is managed and regulated by your brain. This daily cycle/rhythm lasts 24 hours. So, what we do during the day usually affects how well we sleep. During your sleep cycle, if completed, one typically goes through four to six stages of sleep. Each cycle takes approximately 60 to 90 minutes to complete under normal circumstances. Ever notice that if you wake up during the night, it is usually around the same time? Such as 135 or 330? That's because you are at the end of one of these stages.

The first three stages of the sleep cycle are non-rapid eye movement (NREM) and the last sleep cycle stage is rapid eye movement or (REM).

Throughout the night, you will continually move from one sleep stage to another. The light sleep stage is when you are falling asleep. The intermediate sleep stage is next followed by the deep sleep stage. The dreaming sleep stage is the aforementioned REM. This is when you have the most brain activity. It is when you dream and when your body functions speed up.

With our newfound knowledge of how our body works during the healthy sleep cycle, what can we do to achieve it?

Mayo Clinic suggests the following: use your bedroom for sleep, do not use it for discussing problems, worrying, studying or paying bills; make your bed and bedroom as relaxing as possible, use clean and fresh linens, keep the temperature comfortable, most folks prefer slightly cooler; use a mattress and

pillow that suits your individual needs such as back sleeper, side sleeper and belly sleeper; manage the light in your bedroom keeping it as dark as possible; if you use a fan, point it away from you; use calming scents in your room such as lavender; go to bed and get up at approximately the same time every day. Avoid heavy or spicy meals two to three hours before bedtime, try to exercise, don't drink caffeine approximately 10 hours prior to bedtime; wear comfortable pajamas; spend the time prior to bedtime doing quiet and relaxing activities and this, perhaps the hardest of them all – stop using electronics such as the TV, computer and smart phone about an hour before you got to bed.

And, if none of this works, come see us at Natural Healing Express, we will help you find a sleep remedy. Lots of wonderful things happening at Natural Healing Express! And the Silver Fox café is the place to be! Come try some healthy gourmet food – delicious and fast! Dr. Susan is available on Wednesdays and Saturdays and by appointment!

Enjoy! Hope to see you soon and as always, please contact us via one of the following methods. Natural Healing Express: Phone 815 990 8732 or 317 409 1500 email: skscham@aol.com Address -204 W Main St, Lena, IL 61048. Website: www.naturalhealingexpress.com Facebook: Natural Healing Express