IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

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Most of the time we disregard the importance of sleep to the overall health of the body, especially with how easy it is to stay up late watching movies, playing online games, and doing other activities with our gadgets.

This is very concerning considering how vital the process of sleep. It may seem that our body is in suspended animation while we slumber, but in fact, our body and specially our brain are more active during these hours. An adult needs six to seven hours of sleep each night, while a child require eight to ten hours to ensure proper body functions.

There are a lot of benefits in having a good night’s sleep. Among the few are the following:

Sleep keeps the cardiovascular system healthy. The lack of sleep can be associated with worsening of high blood pressure and cholesterol which can lead to heart illnesses like cardiac arrest and stroke. By having proper sleep and having healthy life style and diet, these diseases can be prevented.

Sleep also aides in preventing the development of cancer cells. People who work late at night or those who are graveyard shifts are more exposed to artificial lights which reduce the melatonin levels, melatonin is a hormone produced by the body which standardizes the sleep-wake cycle, these hormones are also believed to protect healthy cells from cancer and withhold the growth of tumors. That is why it is also advisable to
keep bedrooms dark and avoid the use of gadgets to facilitate the body’s melatonin production.

Proper slumber reduces stress. When the body is sleep deprived it goes into a state of stress. Just think of it as a car that is almost out of fuel, the signal lights will go up to indicate what it needs. Stress is that signal light, it is an indication of need.

Lack of sleep can reduce inflammation in the body. During sleep the body repairs and produce new cells to fix damaged areas thus reducing swelling and other reactions to injury.

For students proper and sufficient hours of sleep at night are very beneficial because it helps them stay alert and focused in class. They are also more susceptible to learning new skills and things. While we sleep our brain processed the repetitive memory which is also related to practice skills. The brain plays the information again and again ensuring high percentage of retention. While sleeping the brain is a busy making connection with events and information, sensory inputs, and emotion. This process is called deep sleep, it is what we interpret as dreaming.

Sleep deprivation can lead to obesity and diabetes. Without proper sleep the body will be unable to produce correct hormones that stabilize to the body. This in turn makes you gain weight. Insulin production is also related to proper sleep because these hormones are produce while the body is in slumber. Having good amount of sleep can reduce the risk of depression also due to hormonal balance.

During sleep, our body heals itself; it rejuvenates and revitalize cells and organs. So it is important to not take it for granted. Especially for growing and developing children and teens.
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