

Corning Healthcare District

ELDER SERVICES

Newsletter

No. 23

Spring 2023

All About Sleep

Getting enough sleep may

- Boost your mood
- Help you lose or maintain weight
- Improve concentration and productivity
- Reduce stress
- Strengthen your heart
- Support a healthy immune system
- Enhance reaction time, motor function, and physical endurance
- Augment focus and problem-solving skills



Lack of sleep can lead to

- Irritability
- Weight gain
- Brain fog
- Increased inflammation
- Depression
- Increased risk of insulin resistance and Type 2 Diabetes



How much sleep do you need?

Experts recommend seven to nine hours needed for a healthy system but most people get well below that. Enter the nap.



A twenty-minute nap can increase relaxation, reduce fatigue, and improve mood. If you nap, keep it short – no more than thirty minutes, and not too late in the day.

Are you an Early Bird



or a Night Owl?



Variations in sleep patterns are called chronotypes. These are governed by a small clump of cells called the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN), which is composed of approximately 20,000 neurons. The SCN sits at the intersection of the optical nerve, in the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus, roughly the size of a peanut, is located right in the middle of the brain and is responsible for regulating our "body clock." As we age our SCN releases different signals. Roughly 40 percent of Americans are physiologically primed to be early birds. Their peak wakefulness arrives early in the day and they get sleepier earlier in the evening. Around 30 percent are night owls and about 30 percent don't have a strong, defined chronotype.



Contact Information:

Elaine Benwell
Elder Services Program Manager
Corning Healthcare District
P.O. Box 996

275 Solano Street, Suite 103

Corning, CA 96021

Phone: 530-824-5451

Email: chd.elderservices@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Corning-Healthcare-District-2050272095201371>

Or visit our website at

<https://www.corninghealthcaredistrict.org>



Corning
Healthcare District

Bringing Health Services to Southern Tehama County

STAGES OF SLEEP

Simply stated there are four basic stages of sleep that your body experiences each night (usually spanning 3-5 sleep cycles): Awake, Light Sleep, Deep Sleep, and REM (Rapid Eye Movement) Sleep. During REM sleep, major muscles that you normally control (such as arms and legs) can't move. In effect, they become temporarily paralyzed. Usually, REM sleep arrives about an hour and a half after you go to sleep. The first REM period lasts about 10 minutes. Each REM stage that follows gets longer and longer. The amount of REM sleep you experience changes as you age. The percentage of REM sleep is highest during infancy and early childhood, declines during adolescence and young adulthood, and declines even more as you get older. Deep sleep is what helps you feel refreshed in the morning. It's also the phase in which your body repairs muscle and tissue, encourages growth and development, and improves immune function.



Help Yourself Get a Good Night's Sleep

- Maintain a consistent sleep schedule.
- Go to sleep and wake up around the same time every day, even on weekends and vacations.
- Get natural daylight exposure, especially early in the morning.
- Avoid alcohol before bedtime.
- Create a good sleep environment. Make sure your bed and pillows are comfortable. Keep bedroom cool and dark. Eliminating noise and light disruptions can help you get uninterrupted sleep and promote proper alignment of your circadian rhythm.
- Clear your mind before bed. Make a to-do list early in the evening so you won't stay awake in bed and worry about the next day.
- Exercise every day. Stay active but try to avoid exercising during the few hours right before bed.
- Relax. Before bed, take a warm bath, meditate, read, or do another relaxing activity.
- Put devices away. Blue light from computer, laptops, phones, and other devices can block the release of melatonin, a vital hormone that acts as a signal for slumber.

Try Brainwave Entrainment

Brainwaves are electrical impulses. There are five categories of brainwaves, ranging from the most activity to the least activity. Binaural beats can be created at different frequencies to synchronize with your brainwaves. Each frequency is associated with outcomes that correspond to different levels of brain wave activity -- Gamma, Beta, Alpha, Theta, and Delta. Delta are the slowest brain waves and listening to binaural beats at delta frequencies can help you sleep. Binaural beats and isochronic tones stimulate and influence your brainwaves, using the sound of repetitive beats. Both methods work by stimulating your brain with continuous repetitive beats of a specific frequency. When your brain is stimulated with a repetitive beat, your dominant brainwaves start to fall in sync to the same speed of the beats. Binaural beats are a perception of sound created by your brain. If you listen to two tones, each at a different frequency and each in a different ear, your brain creates an additional tone you can hear. This third tone is called a binaural beat -- you hear it at the frequency difference between the two tones. To hear the binaural beat, you must have sound coming in each ear so you have to use headphones or earbuds. The discovery of binaural beats can be traced back to a German scientist, Heinrich Wilhelm Dove in 1839. Isochronic tones are a newer discovery, first published in a study by Arturo Manns in 1981.

There are hundreds of sleep tracks available for free on **YouTube** and **Insight Timer**

Changing the clocks – Daylight

Savings Time – can seriously disrupt sleep patterns but it has proved a complicated issue to resolve. Only federal action can make the change nationwide and permanent, but if accomplished it could mean major shifts in our daylight exposure and sleep.



Common Sleep Disorders include:

- Insomnia
- Narcolepsy
- Restless legs syndrome (RLS)
- Sleep apnea
- Snoring

If you've been having trouble sleeping or feel extra drowsy during the day, talk to your healthcare provider. There are many treatments available for sleep disorders.

- The Corning Healthcare District (CHD) Elder Services Program provides health and wellness education, workshops on cooking and nutrition, Medicare counseling through HICAP, Diabetes support, and information on a wide variety of issues relevant to seniors, including Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's, caregiving, falls prevention, personal and home safety, emergency preparedness, depression and mental health, suicide prevention, and end of life planning.* We have assisted seniors with incontinence supplies, walkers, emergency food, and much more.
- CHD Elder Services also distributes the File of Life refrigerator magnet and personal-size cards free of charge to community members age 50 and over.
- *Disclaimer: Elaine Benwell is not a medical professional. She provides information and support only. She does not diagnose, treat, prescribe, or give medical advice.