

SAFETY OUTLOOK

March 2015



Avoiding Substance Abuse Through Wellness! PART 1

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!”

While many of us have heard the old proverb, we might all readily agree that it is easier said than done! Over the next few newsletters, we would like to encourage our readers to stay proactive in avoiding substance abuse through a healthy lifestyle.

Fortunately, some things in life are still free – and that includes SLEEP! Being well rested has many benefits yet is often neglected. Work productivity, energy levels, mood states, and even peer relationships are all effected by our sleep, or lack thereof. According to the Mayo Clinic, a typical adult needs 7-8 hours of rest to maintain a state of good health. Some adults may need more or less depending on their individual needs. However, research shows that people who sleep so little over many nights don't perform well on complex mental tasks and are more likely to struggle with depression.

Here are a few tips to help you achieve more sleeping time:

- **Adjust to an earlier bedtime.** While this can be challenging for some with varying work shift times, young children, or circumstances outside of your control, most of the time, we can make simple changes to really see a difference in our physical health.
- **Try to avoid screens (computers, smartphones, TV, etc) 1-2 hours before going to bed.** Research has proven that the blue lights on screens can reduce our bodies natural melatonin, thus making it difficult to have a restful sleep.
- **Have a regular bedtime & routine.** This doesn't mean you need to fall asleep at the same exact minute every night. However, your body will feel more rested if you have a calming routine before heading to bed. Reading a book before falling asleep allows your eyes, mind, and body to naturally grow tired. You might try this and see if it works for you!
- **Be patient!** If you have been sleep deprived for any length of time, you may need more sleep than others and find it takes several weeks of consistently going to bed earlier and getting a good night's sleep to reap the many health benefits.

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