Get Healthier Sleep

GET HEALTHIER SLEEP HEALTH LESSON | Lesson Overview

Welcome

- Background Information and Urgent Community Need
- Program Objectives

Health Lesson

- What Happens When You Sleep?
- How Sleep Affects Your Heart Health
- Healthy Sleep Habits

Closing Thoughts

- Wrap-Up/Calls to Action
- Online Resources

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PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

After today's lesson, you'll be able to share with your family and friends:

- The importance of sleeping well

- How sleep can affect your heart health/risk factors

- Ways that you can improve your sleep hygiene/sleeping habits

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU SLEEP: The Benefits of Good Sleep

Healthy sleep is important for cognitive functioning, mood, mental health, cardiovascular, cerebrovascular, and metabolic health. Adequate quantity and quality of sleep also play a role in reducing the risk of accidents and injuries caused by sleepiness and fatigue, including workplace accidents and motor vehicle crashes.

- Sleep is time for your body to heal and repair its cells, tissues and blood vessels.

- Being well-rested can help you have better brain function, including alertness, decision-making, focus, learning, memory, reasoning and problem-solving.

- Getting good quality sleep can also lessen the risk of chronic diseases and strengthen your immune system.

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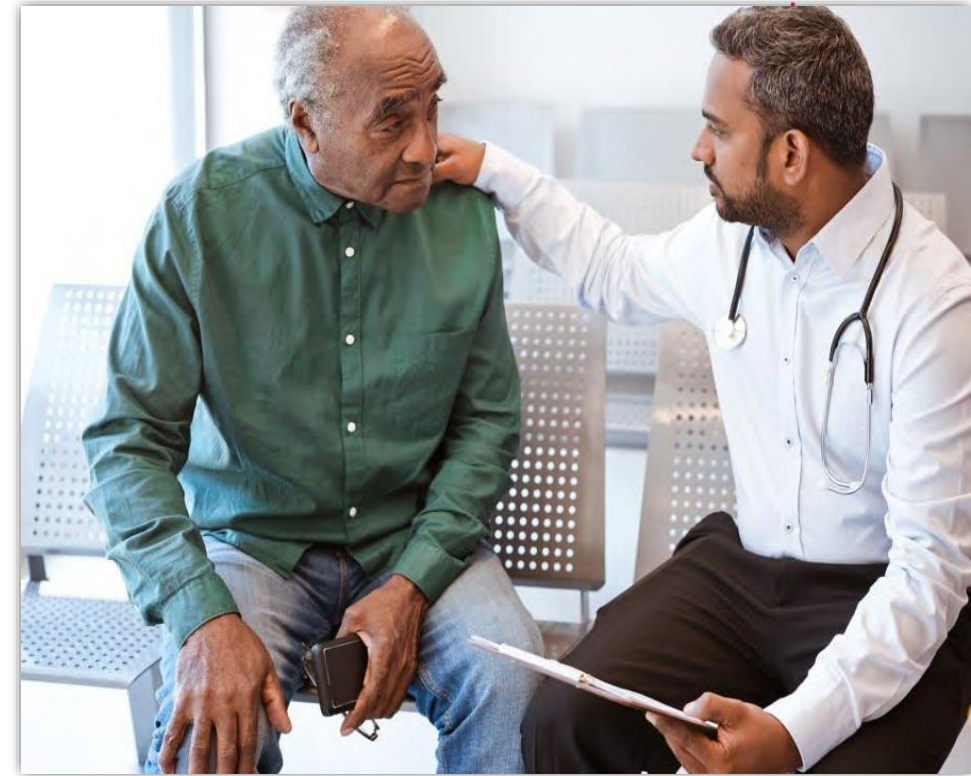
THE DISADVANTAGES OF POOR SLEEP: Sleep Deprivation

- Sleep deprivation can be not getting enough hours, or not having restful sleep.

- Poor-quality sleep can increase the risks for Alzheimer's disease and other progressive diseases.

- Poor-quality sleep can also affect appetite, stress and weight gain, all of which are important to a heart-healthy lifestyle.

- Over time, poor sleep can also lead to unhealthy habits that can hurt your heart, including higher stress levels, less motivation to be physically active, and unhealthy food choices

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COMMON SLEEP DISORDERS

Several common sleep disorders can play an important role in your health. If you are experiencing any symptoms of a sleep disorder, please reach out to a health care professional for diagnosis and potential treatment.

- **Insomnia**
  Insomnia is the inability to initiate or maintain sleep. This may also happen when you wake up several hours early and cannot get back to sleep.

- **Narcolepsy**
  Narcolepsy is a combination of excessive daytime sleepiness and sudden muscle weakness. These "sleep attacks" may happen at unusual times, such as during walking or other physical activity.

- **Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)**
  Also known as Willis-Ekbom Disease, occurs when you have uncomfortable sensations in your legs and an irresistible urge to move them. RLS can disrupt your sleep , making it difficult to fall asleep and maintain sleep.

- **Sleep Apnea**
  Sleep apnea is when breathing is obstructed, and sleep is temporarily interrupted. This may often present itself as snoring or periodic gasping of air and snorting noises.

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POOR SLEEP HABITS: Sleep Debt

- Do you have sleep debt? It's the difference between the amount of sleep you need and the amount you actually get.

  - For example, when you get little sleep during the week and try to catch up on sleep over the weekend.

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HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS: Maximize Your Days

- What you do during the day can make a difference in your circadian rhythm. A great way to jump-start your day is exercising early in the morning to wake up your body and your mind.

- Eating a healthy diet can help you get more restful sleep. Minimizing processed meats, refined carbohydrates and sugary drinks can help you get deeper sleep.

- Balance your calories and caffeine intake throughout your day. Consider drinking your last cup of coffee earlier in the day to reduce disruptions to your sleep.

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HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS: Tweak Your Tech Habits

- Did you know that the bright blue light of most devices can mess with your circadian rhythm and melatonin production?

- Consider using a red filter at night to reduce the blue light in your phone's screen.

- Alarms let you know when to wake up, but you can also use alarms to let you know when to sleep. Set time aside at the end of the night to wind down before catching some Zzz's.

- Unplug before bed! Charge or place your devices as far away from your bed as possible to get rid of the temptation to scroll late at night.

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HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS: Make Mindful Moments

- Reduce stress before bedtime by intentionally making mindful moments to wind down. Set aside 30 minutes to an hour to unplug from your electronics and get your mind ready for rest.

- Meditation can be a powerful tool in mindfulness. Deep breathing can elicit the relaxation response and is a quick and simple way to clear your mind.

- Journaling is another quick and simple way to relax your brain. Journaling is as easy as writing down what you are grateful for or addressing what's on your mind that may be causing disruptions or anxiety.

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CALL TO ACTION

- Embrace healthier sleep habits.

- Schedule an appointment with a health care professional if you are showing symptoms of a sleep disorder.

- Minimize time on your devices such as smart phones, tablets, etc.

- Keep us informed – Follow us @AmericanHeart on social media and DM us to let us know how you're doing

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