

quiz

Zzz...



How sleep-savvy are you?

TEST YOUR SLEEP SMARTS!



By Julia Tolliver Maranan

how high on your priority list is getting a good night's sleep? Unfortunately, it's not high enough for most of us. We've all stayed up an extra hour or two to finish a good book, check off one more item on the to-do list, or even to squeeze in a workout. A little drowsiness the next day at work or at the gym can't hurt, right? Actually, lack of sleep can affect your health and

fitness in surprising ways. In fact, sleep disorders, sleep deprivation, and sleepiness increase national healthcare costs by \$15.9 million every year, according to the National Center for Sleep Disorder Research at the National Institutes of Health.

Read on to see if you know the facts about sleeping smart.



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1. On average, how many hours should you snooze per night?

- A. 7 hours
- B. 8 hours
- C. 9 hours
- D. enough to feel recharged

Answer: D. While research shows that most people need 8 hours of shuteye a night (give or take 15 minutes), what's more important is finding out how much sleep it takes for you to wake up refreshed, according to Michael Breus, PhD, cofounder of the Atlanta-based Sound Sleep, LLC.

2. What percentage of adults have racked up a significant sleep debt?

- A. 12 percent
- B. 28 percent
- C. 33 percent
- D. 54 percent

Answer: C. At least one-third of adults are chronically sleep deprived. And shortchanging your sleep by as little as 1.3 to 1.5 hours for just one night can reduce your alertness the next day by up to 32 percent!

3. What percentage of car accidents are caused by sleepy drivers?

- A. 10 percent
- B. 20 percent
- C. 30 percent
- D. 40 percent

Answer: B. A recent study found that sleepiness plays a role in as many as 20 percent of motor vehicle accidents. Even a few hours of sleep deprivation can impair your driving performance as much as if you were intoxicated.

4. Chronic sleep deprivation can lead to

- A. hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and weight gain.
- B. ADD.
- C. allergies and asthma.
- D. all of the above.

Answer: A. Research shows that even short-term sleep restriction can raise your blood pressure, and people who get less than 7 hours a night have a slightly increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Perhaps more surprising is the link to weight gain. Sleep deprivation boosts levels of the hormone cortisol, which in turn increases your appetite. And if that isn't bad enough, "If you don't get enough sleep, your metabolism slows down," says Breus. In addition to burning fewer calories, a slower metabolism means your blood sugar levels remain higher, stimulating the overproduction of insulin. Excess insulin tells your body to store more fat and, if left unchecked, may lead to diabetes.

5. Exercise encourages sweet slumber by

- A. causing your body to release endorphins.
- B. tiring your muscles and increasing your relaxation response.
- C. increasing your deep sleep, when the body makes most repairs.
- D. all of the above.

Answer: D. Working out sends a rush of endorphins into your system, and some of those endorphins promote sleep. A vigorous sweat session also will exhaust your muscles in a way that helps you fall asleep easier. And the clincher is that regular aerobic exercise—more than 30 minutes, three times a week—sets the stage for deep, restorative sleep.

6. Sleep deprivation can affect exercise performance by

- A. leaving your muscles tired and unable to perform to their potential.
- B. slowing your reaction time and hampering your judgment.
- C. throwing your balance off.
- D. making you more injury-prone.

Answer: B and D. "There is a significant relationship between sleep deprivation and reaction time," says Breus. If you're training for a triathlon, for example, your delayed reactions could dramatically affect your time. Sleepiness also dulls your mental acuity, which interferes with decision-making ability, and that could lead to injury.

7. Which of the following are good ways to make up for lost sleep?

- A. a power nap
- B. increasing your sleep time over the next week
- C. sleeping in on the weekends
- D. all of the above

Answer: D. All of these methods will help you counteract a reasonable amount of sleep deprivation. But you're not going to make up for 5 hours of lost sleep with a 45-minute siesta. Breus says, "A power nap is a good tool if you pulled an all-nighter and you need to be alert for the next hour. It's not a good tool if you need to be alert for the next 5 hours."

8. When is the best time to exercise?

- A. first thing in the morning
- B. on your lunch break
- C. around dinnertime
- D. right before bed

Answer: B or C. Exercising right after you wake up provides the greatest opportunity for injury because your muscles aren't stretched and warm, according to Breus. Exercising before bed is generally a no-no because it's too stimulating and can keep you awake. So unless you diligently warm up in the morning, he recommends working out on your lunch break or later in the afternoon.

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