

Dispelling Sleep Myths:

Myth One : Spending more time in bed at will give you a better chance of getting sleep. Not true. In fact the opposite is true. The more time you spend in bed without sleeping the more your mind and body make the association of wakeful time in bed making it harder to fall asleep.

Myth Two: I need at least 8 hours of sleep each night to be healthy. This is False. Some people need as little as 4 or 5 hours others need 9-10 hours of sleep to feel rested. Our health is affected by many different factors, not just sleep.

Myth Three: A Little Nap During the Day Will Not Affect Your Sleep: False. Sleep accumulated across a 24 hour period. Your body needs to be sleep stressed in order to sleep. If you normally need 7 hours per day to feel good and you take an hour nap in the day you only need 6 hours that night.

Myth Four: Insomnia Only Happens to People who are Anxious or Depressed: False. Although anxiety and depression can cause insomnia, so can plenty of other stressors.

Myth Five: A Night Cap is a Good Idea: False. Alcohol though normally considered a depressant also acts to stimulate your system and may cause you to stir more in the night and have a less restful sleep.

Myth Six: Watching TV in Bed is a Good Idea: False, activating your mind through audio and visual stimulation which is counter to falling asleep.

Myth Seven: If I don't get enough sleep during the week, I can make up for it on the weekend. Getting more sleep on the weekend only makes you feel better that day. You will still feel sleep deprived on the days you deprive yourself of sleep. Don't voluntarily restrict your sleep.

References:

This document is adapted from: Silberman, S. (2008). *The Insomnia Workbook: A Step by Step Program Including: Effective Cognitive Behavior Techniques, Up-To-Date Information on Medication, Tips For a Sleep-Friendly Lifestyle, Advice For Maintaining Your Program.*

Also based on the work of Dr. Specca from Tom Baker Institute in Calgary (With permission).

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