

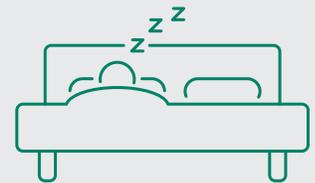
Insight

An e-newsletter for supervisors and managers from your Aurora Employee Assistance Program



To learn more about Aurora EAP,

visit aurora.org/eap or call 800-236-3231.



How much sleep do adults need?

Adults need between **seven and nine hours** of uninterrupted sleep a night to feel well rested and function at their best. In addition to sleep disorders or insomnia, factors such as illness, worry, stress, psychological concerns, medications and work shift/scheduling changes can all interfere with getting a good night's sleep.

Sleep matters in the workplace

Getting enough sleep is not a luxury — it's something everyone needs for good health. Employers who take measures to ensure a workplace and organizational culture that promotes adequate sleep health can keep their organization one step ahead of the competition — with healthier employees and reduced health care costs. Your organization can reap additional benefits by having a more engaged and productive workforce, too.

Short changing sleep is a health concern

Lack of good, restorative sleep is harmful to living a healthy life. According to the CDC, about one third of all U.S. adults report that they usually get less than the recommended amount of sleep. Sleep deprivation is linked with many chronic diseases and conditions including diabetes, heart disease, obesity and depression that threaten our nation's health¹

Sleep deficiency has been linked to increases in:

- motor vehicle crashes
- industrial accidents and disasters
- medical and other occupational errors

Insufficient sleep can also result in:

- difficulties in concentrating
- lowering a person's ability to learn
- problems performing daily tasks



The surprising costs of inadequate sleep

The direct and indirect costs of sleep disturbances are estimated to be \$100 billion annually in the United States.² Performance and productivity is significantly lower among workers who have insomnia, compared with those who usually sleep well. Sleep difficulties cost employers an average of \$3,000 more (per employee) in annual health care costs and increased absenteeism.

Promoting healthy sleep in the workplace

Workplace scheduling can have a significant impact on healthy sleep habits. Scheduling workers at **consistent shift times** supports the opportunity for better sleep.

Workplace norms that discourage “after hours” electronic communication (email, texting) with co-workers can also contribute to good sleep hygiene practices. Sleep experts recommend eliminating exposure to digital screens **at least one hour before bedtime**. Promoting a healthy work-life balance that allows for evening down time, regular exercise, relaxation and wellness activities is important, too.



Fostering a workplace culture that encourages employees to get adequate sleep (rather than equating getting less sleep with “working harder”) is important to promote a healthy workforce, too.

Are you sleepless?

For anyone dealing with a chronic sleep problem a professional assessment by a physician or a psychologist trained in sleep medicine can provide an appropriate diagnosis and proper treatment for sleep problems. When sleep disorders are successfully treated, a person’s health, mood, concentration and workplace productivity all increase. Both the employee and the employer will benefit from this.

Remember, sleep is important. Routinely getting enough restorative sleep can greatly improve one’s overall mood, health, relationships, productivity and life.

¹ (n.d.) Retrieved July 25, 2018, from <https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/index.html>

² Rosekind, M.R. & Gregory, K.B. (2010). *Insomnia risks and costs: Health, safety and quality of life. American Journal of Managed Care* 16 (8), 617-626

According to National Center for Sleep Disorders research, in any given year, approximately 30-40% of adults experience some symptoms of insomnia and approximately 10-15% of adults report that they have chronic insomnia. An American Insomnia Study by Harvard Medical School (2011), states insomnia costs the average U.S. worker 11.3 days, or \$2,280 in lost productivity every year. In the United States, the total cost of lower productivity due to insomnia is estimated to be \$63.2 billion. Untreated sleep apnea may cause \$3.4 billion in additional health care costs.



The American Automobile Association (AAA) estimates that 17% of deadly traffic accidents, and 13% of all crashes requiring hospitalization of drivers or passengers are due to drowsy driving. One analysis using a “human capital” method, estimated the cost of automobile accidents attributed to sleepiness to range between \$29.2 - \$37.9 billion.

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