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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

A French Emperor was once quoted as saying "six hours of sleep for a man, seven for a women, and eight for a fool". This is a debatable issue but in a recent study of four hundred adults, it was found that women slept an average of seven-and-a-half hours a day, about fifteen minutes longer than men. Many experts agree that seven-and-a-half hours seem to be adequate. However, they also caution that the range may vary from as few as five hours to as many as ten, depending on the person. It has been estimated that over one hundred million Americans do not get a good night's sleep on a regular basis, while another thirty three million have occasional problems.

It is also well known by all sleep experts that there can be serious consequences if you don't satisfy your sleep needs, whatever they may be. Sleep is very important for our nervous system to work properly. Too little sleep leaves us drowsy and unable to concentrate the next day. It also leads to impaired memory and physical performance and reduced ability to carry out mathematical problems. There are also public safety concerns. Thousands of car crashes due to drowsy drivers occur each year, resulting in serious injuries and fatalities.

Some common disorders that keep people from getting the proper amount of sleep include:

- chronic low grade back or neck stiffness/pain, preventing you from getting comfortable and waking you up every time you change positions in bed.
- headaches that commence in the early hours of the morning, commonly called cervicogenic tension-type headaches that are due to a neck problem.
- insomnia, the inability to fall asleep.
- sleep apnea, a disruption of breathing during sleep and often characterized by excessive snoring.
- restless legs syndrome, where unpleasant sensations in the legs cause an uncontrollable urge to move them for relief, preventing sleep.

The National Sleep Foundation and your local Chiropractor have a few simple guidelines to help you get to sleep easier:

- go to bed at the same time every night and try to refrain from excessively sleeping in on weekends.
- exercise twenty to thirty minutes a day, preferably five to six hours before bedtime.
- avoid caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, and certain medications (ask your Medical Doctor about this before discontinuing any meds).
- read a book before falling asleep, as it will clear your thoughts.
- have our chiropractor address any potential back or neck problems.
- visit your chiropractor to eliminate the cervicogenic tension-type headaches.

If you are still having problems falling asleep or are not getting enough of it, seek further help from your health care practitioner.