

Are You Sleeping Enough?

by Bill Leaver in [Health/Wellness](#)
July 14, 2015

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Sleep is essential for an individual's health and well-being. Yet according to the [National Sleep Foundation](#), millions of people don't get enough, and many suffer from a lack of sleep.

Several research studies examined the impacts of sleep deprivation, and the results are cause for concern. [Insufficient sleep](#) is associated with several chronic diseases and conditions, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and depression. It can have the same effect as alcohol on our minds.

In 2003, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (the organization responsible for medical training programs across the country) took a step in standardizing the importance of sleep in the workplace by implementing standards for resident-training programs. They limited the residents' hours to no more than 80 per week, averaged over four weeks, and included one day in seven away from work. The requirements produced positive results, including benefits for medical residents and reduced errors.

Consider your team and their schedules, as well as your own personal sleep habit: is everyone getting enough rest? While personal needs vary, the [experts](#) recommend an average of eight hours of sleep each night to stay alert and productive.

Sufficient sleep is increasingly being recognized as an essential aspect of chronic disease prevention and health promotion. I suggest adding [sleeping tips](#) to your organization's employee wellness program, including:

- Establish a regular bed and wake time.
- Avoid caffeine close to bedtime.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Exercise regularly (but complete the workout at least three hours before bedtime).
- Establish a consistent bedtime routine.
- Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet and comfortable.
- Discuss the appropriate way to take any sleep aid with a health care professional.
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These steps can help your team members reduce mistakes and on-the-job injuries while enjoying peaceful nights and healthier lives.

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