



The Importance of Sleep for Health and Wellness

Likelihood is that you know very little about a third of your life – your sleep. Yet these may be the most important hours of your life for health and wellness. It is very important to become familiar with your sleep, which can only be achieved through objective measurement of sleep quality and sleep duration to evaluate your sleep pathology. SleepImage has the only FDA-cleared unit of measure for sleep health, the Sleep Quality Index (SQI), which is a summary measure of your sleep health presented on a scale of 0 – 100. Improving sleep quality reduces your risk for various disease states and adds to your life expectancy.

Why do we sleep?

Sleep provides an opportunity for the body to repair and rejuvenate itself. Many of the major restorative functions like muscle growth, tissue repair, protein synthesis and growth hormone release, occurs mostly (and in some cases only) during sleep.

It seems obvious that sleep is beneficial. Sleep not only makes us feel better; it is critical to the quality of our life and longevity. The better we understand why we sleep, the better we learn to respect sleep's function to enjoy the health benefits it affords.

To truly benefit from sleep it is all about enjoying stable, quality sleep.

Consequences of insufficient quality sleep

The most immediate effect of sleep deprivation is sleepiness. In our daily lives, we may experience this as general fatigue, lack of motivation, or even the experience of nodding off. Most people don't get enough sleep, which has negative short and long-term consequences.

In the short term, a lack of adequate sleep affects judgment, mood and the ability to learn. It may also increase the risk for serious accidents and injury.

In the long term, chronic sleep deprivation may lead to a host of health problems including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, depression, certain types of cancer and may increase your risk of early mortality.

The role of Healthcare Providers in evaluating sleep quality

While an estimated 70 million Americans suffer from some type of sleep disorder, most people do not mention their sleeping problems to their doctors, and many doctors do not ask about their patients' sleep. There is widespread lack of awareness of the impact of sleep dysfunction and the serious and costly health consequences associated with lack of sleep or the presence of untreated sleep disorders.

Everyone needs to know their sleep quality and it should be a part of routine clinical examinations. Managing sleep quality is as important as managing weight and blood pressure.

For more information on the importance of tracking sleep quality, sleep duration and sleep pathology visit www.sleepimage.com and make sleep evaluation based on objective and clinically validated measurements a routine part of clinical examinations.