

# NEWS

# FLUSH



MELROSE  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
PREVENTION COALITION

...in the know while you go

## Why is sleep so important?



### TIPS for better sleep:

Stick to a sleep schedule, even on the weekends!

Don't take naps after 3pm— it will make it harder to sleep at night

If it's daylight try to get outside for some Vitamin D!

If possible wake up with the sun or with lights

Avoid large meals and beverages late at night

Create a good sleeping environment by getting rid of distractions and screens (like TV, computer and cellphone)

Don't lay awake in bed— get up and do a relaxing activity (like listening to music or reading) until you feel sleepy

### Caffeine:

Can take as long as 8 hours to wear off

Makes it hard to fall asleep

Found in chocolate, tea, coffee, soda and energy drinks

If you absolutely need it, only drink it in the morning— avoid caffeine after-school



- Lack of sleep can cause mood problems, inability to focus or respond quickly
- Chronic lack of sleep increases risk for obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and infections
- Getting enough sleep helps you to grasp new, learned information or skills and improve memory
- Getting more sleep can fuel normal growth and muscle mass
- Evidence is growing that sleep is a powerful regulator of appetite, energy use, and weight control
- Experts suggest that while people sleep, they form or reinforce the pathways in the brain cells needed for learning and memory.
- Getting a good night's sleep on a regular basis helps keep you from getting sick and helps you get better if you do get sick. *Cytokines* are cellular hormones that help the immune system fight various infections.
- Recommended that school-aged children and adolescents get 9 or more hours of sleep, but quality of sleep is just as important as quantity

### **How safe are sleeping pills?**

Sleeping medications (such as Ambien) are depressants that slow down (or “depress”) the normal activity that goes on in the brain and spinal cord. Doctors often prescribe them for people who are having difficulty sleeping.

Dependence and addiction are still potential risks when taking these medications. Abuse of depressants can lead to physical dependence, which is when the body gets used to the drug and a person can't stop taking it without feeling discomfort or even worse symptoms.

Depressants should never be combined with any medicine or substance that causes sleepiness, like prescription pain meds, certain cold and allergy meds, or alcohol.

**Have an idea for next month's issue?**

**Email the youth action team!! :)**

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