

The workplace benefits of sleep

Slumber Number Challenge Health Information Fourth Quarter, 2015

Hi-ho, hi-ho it's off to work we go. Don't make "Sleepy" your role model. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 41 million U.S. workers get less than six hours of sleep a night, which means 30% of the U.S. workforce is getting less than the recommended seven to nine hours a night. Sleep is not something people are taking as seriously as they should, and fatigue in the workplace has many consequences including injury, lost productivity, health consequences and increased costs.

Injury

If you go to work lacking the amount of sleep your body needs to restore itself, you will be more likely to make mistakes that may hurt yourself or others. According to the National Sleep Foundation, highly drained workers are 70% more likely to be involved in accidents compared to those who are well rested.

Productivity

Lack of sleep causes your productivity to go down. Reaction time, judgment, and vision are impaired. You may experience problems with information processing and have decreased motivation. Sleep deprived workers also report having difficulties concentrating, handling stress, listening, making decisions, and problem solving.

Health

Lack of sleep puts you at an increased risk for heart disease, obesity, diabetes, depression and other health related problems. Lack of sleep can also lower immunity, which in turn increases absenteeism.

Cost

If you are sleep deprived you cannot physically put forth your best efforts; therefore, time and money are wasted. In addition, because sleep deprived workers are more prone to sickness and injury, sleep related fatigue costs have been estimated to cost businesses \$150 billion a year due to absenteeism, lost productivity, and workplace accidents.

Solutions

Take a break when possible

- Go for a 10 minute brisk walk to wake up
- Step outside for some fresh air
- Have a healthy snack to provide energy
- Strive to achieve the recommended 7–9 hours of sleep per night.

Source: Sleep Center of Greater Pittsburgh

