

The ABCs of Sleep to Help You Get Your "Z"s at Night

- A** - Athletes age 10-17 need at least 8-9 hours of sleep per night, while adult athletes (18+) need at least 7-8 hours of sleep per night.
- B** - Be sure to limit caffeine intake following lunchtime as caffeine can stay in your system for up to 6-12 hours. If you feel you need caffeine to stay awake throughout the day, extra sleep time throughout the week may be needed.
- C** - Children who get less than 8 hours of sleep per night are 1.7 times more likely to get injured.
- D** - Decreased alertness, focus, performance, and productivity are all possible signs of insufficient sleep.
- E** - Exercise regularity not only improves general wellness, but also improves sleep health.
- F** - Fatigue from lack of sleep is the leading cause of sports injuries in adolescent athletes.
- G** - Glaucoma, headaches, depression, anxiety, and dementia have all been noted as potential consequences of insufficient sleep.
- H** - Heightened risk of illnesses, in addition to injuries, has also been tied to chronic fatigue and impaired sleep regularity.
- I** - Insufficient sleep can also lead to an increased number of absences, accidents, and errors.
- J** - Jet lag can be experienced by athletes who have to travel long distances to various sporting events, which puts them at greater risk for fatigue, disorientation, poor athletic performance, and more.
- K** - Keeping a routine sleep schedule is important for optimal sleep hygiene and athletic performance. This includes performing the same routine before bed every night, going to bed at the same time every night, and waking up with the morning light when possible.
- L** - Limiting daytime naps helps individuals sleep deeper at night, which is critical for proper development.
- M** - Misdiagnosis of ADHD is possible if someone is not getting regular, adequate sleep.
- N** - Nicotine usage should be avoided by all athletes as stimulants can greatly impact sleep health.
- O** - Obesity, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, strokes, and more are all possible consequences of insufficient sleep.
- P** - Physical characteristics associated with certain sports (ex: larger necks and/or greater body masses in football players) can predispose athletes to sleep apnea.
- Q** - Quality sleep is important for post-workout, whole-body recovery, and is optimal when athletes are able to sleep without interruptions brought on by sleep fragmentation, disturbances in their environment, and/or various sleep disorders.
- R** - Reaction time, speed, accuracy, and peak athletic performance can all be positively impacted by optimal sleep habits.
- S** - Simply avoid eating, drinking, or exercising within a few hours of your bedtime to ensure optimal sleep.
- T** - Team check-ins can serve as a way to make sure your teammates are getting adequate amounts of sleep throughout the season.
- U** - Untreated sleep apnea in athletes can affect their athletic performance and place excess stress on their cardiovascular system.
- V** - Vitamins, pills, and caffeinated drinks can never replace good sleep.
- W** - Warm showers/baths, reading, and/or stretching in place of TV, computer, phone, and/or tablet usage in the 1-2 hours before bed will promote good sleep hygiene and better athletic performance.
- X** - X marks the spot, and the best spot to sleep is somewhere dark, cool, and quiet.
- Y** - Your sleep, in terms of quality, length, and phase are all important aspects to consider to get the most restorative sleep possible.
- Z** - ZzZzZz - Sleep Well!

If you, a teammate, or anyone you know has questions/concerns regarding sleep, we encourage you to contact our WellSpan Sleep Services Team at (717) 851-4541. They currently offer a wide variety of services including sleep studies, multiple sleep latency testings, maintenance/wakefulness testings, educational programs, consultations, and more.