The Sleep-Weight Connection

A giraffe needs only two hours of sleep a day, a goat about five. Adult humans actually need more—about eight hours per night. According to the National Health Interview survey, about 30 percent of working adults are sleeping less than six hours per night.

So why are we trying to live on a goat's worth of sleep? It doesn't seem too smart, and it turns out lack of sleep may play a part in our expanding waistlines.

Results from sleep studies are beginning to clearly link lack of sleep with several factors that cause weight gain. Sleep deprivation seems to change the balance of certain hormones leading to increased appetite, decreased fullness, and increased cravings for sugary, high-fat and high-calorie foods.

Worse yet, lack of sleep seems to increase body fat and decrease muscle mass. If you are trying to lose weight and not getting enough sleep, your body may be losing as much as 60 percent more muscle than those who are getting eight and a half hours of sleep a night. That means less muscle and a slower metabolism, reducing the calories your body burns over time.

Sleep deprivation is also suspected to lower your body's ability to fight off illness and cause insulin resistance leading to an increased risk of diabetes and heart disease.

Can Foods Help You Sleep Better?

Ever seen a puppy sound asleep with his face planted in the food bowl? Or a toddler who falls face first into her dinner plate—sound asleep?

If you have trouble sleeping, you may dream of a food that would quickly induce sleep. Unfortunately, there is no one food that will have you dropping off into a restful slumber. But, the food choices you make throughout the day can help you fall asleep faster and sleep more soundly.

If you aren’t getting at least eight hours of shut-eye a night, here are some things to avoid:

- Large meals and fatty foods. These make falling asleep more difficult.
- Alcohol.
- Caffeine.
- Smoked meats and cheeses.

Find Our Newsletter Online!
Find this issue, as well as links to resources on our website. Simply visit PacificSource.com/member/condition-support-program, or email us at yoursupport@pacificsource.com.

In This Issue
Sleep Quiz ..........................2
Music for Health.....................3
Member Corner......................3
Occupational Sitting:
It’s Not a Sport .....................3
Want to know more about health reform? ............3
Easy Crockpot Chili.............. 4
The Sleep-Weight Connection
Continued from page 1

- Alcohol. It interrupts the deep sleep your body needs to feel rested.
- Caffeine. It may seem obvious that caffeine will keep you awake if you have it late in the day, but it appears that even small amounts may disrupt sleep.
- Foods that trigger heartburn. The discomfort of heartburn will keep you up at night.

Some things to try:
- Aim for three balanced meals with enough protein—but not too much. Aim for 20 to 30 grams of protein per meal.
- Eat your last meal three to four hours before bedtime. This gives your stomach time to settle.
- Try a small snack with about 30 grams of carbohydrates a couple of hours before bed. Carbohydrates help you feel more relaxed and sleepy, which can stimulate sleep. Here are few suggestions:
  - 1 slice whole-grain toast with 1 tablespoon reduced-sugar jam
  - ½ cup brown rice with cooked spinach and carrots
  - 1 medium banana with 1 tablespoon natural creamy peanut butter
  - 6 ounces plain nonfat yogurt with 1 teaspoon honey and ½ cup fresh berries
  - 1 cup nonfat milk, 8 animal crackers
  - ½ cup nonfat milk, 6 small (2 ½ inch) graham cracker squares

Sleep Quiz

Answer the questions below to find out how you can improve your sleep habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I go to bed within a half hour of the same time each evening.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I wake up at about the same time each morning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I exercise most days of the week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I exercise earlier in the day, or at least three hours before bed time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I avoid stimulants such as caffeine, energy drinks, and certain medications after noon.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I eat a small, low-fat evening meal.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t eat right before bedtime, usually at least two or three hours before bedtime.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>In the evening I avoid large portions, high-fat or spicy foods, or other foods that trigger heartburn.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I drink most of my fluids during the day and before dinner.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I limit alcohol to special occasions. I don’t use alcohol to help me sleep.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I do a strength training exercise routine at least two times per week.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I turn off all my electronic screens, and dim the lights at least one hour before bed time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I do yoga or other gentle stretches in the evening.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I take time to meditate or just sit quietly each evening.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I take a hot bath about 90 minutes before bed time.</td>
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If you are having trouble getting a restful eight hours of sleep each night, experiment with some of the statements to which you answered “No.” These are all helpful action steps to improve the quality and quantity of your sleep.
Occupational Sitting: It’s Not a Sport!
Experts say that prolonged sitting can contribute to many negative health outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and obesity. Sedentary jobs make up about 60 percent of all jobs in the United States today. If you have a job that requires more than five hours of sitting per day, here are some tips that may make your day less of a health risk.

• Consider a standing work station. This gives you flexibility and allows you to go from sitting to standing whenever you like. You can burn 115 calories per hour standing as opposed to a mere 83 per hour sitting.
• Take the stairs to your next meeting or event.
• Set an alarm on your phone or computer that reminds you to get up out of your chair every 30 minutes.
• Stand up during long phone calls. This will increase your heart rate, which helps reduce the risk of some chronic health conditions.
• Try some desk exercises. These can be done in a small area but have a big impact on your health.
• Get a workplace massage if possible. Studies show this improves productivity and decreases absenteeism.

For more information and some examples of desk exercises, visit the following websites:
• WebMD.com/fitness-exercise/features/exercise-at-your-desk
• MayoClinic.org/stretching/sls-20076525
• Prevention.com/fitness/fitness-tips/how-get-fit-work

Music for Health
Did you know that music can improve your mood and may even be good for your heart? For a fun way to boost your health, make a playlist of your favorite songs or new music to explore, turn up the volume, and enjoy every day!

Member Corner
This Participant’s Recipe for Success: Hard Work Plus a Positive Attitude
Richard has always been a “fitness guy.” So when he suffered a heart attack in 2012, he decided to engage in our Condition Support Program. He started working with our team in January of 2013 in the hope that he would lose weight, increase his level of fitness, and improve his overall health.

During the past year, Richard has worked tremendously hard at his health goals by increasing his physical activity and making changes to his diet. Richard consistently evaluates his exercise regimen and adjusts it according to how he is feeling. He uses a variety of tools, including walking his dogs, Wii fit, yoga, running, and even interval training.

Recently, Richard injured himself while running and had to adjust his level of fitness. Despite that, he has kept on with his training and is making progress. What makes Richard a remarkable person is his willingness to accept the setbacks with the victories and keep moving forward.

When asked about his thoughts on the program Richard said, “My Condition Support nurse acts as an outstanding sounding board. It’s nice to have access to medical professionals and it’s been a positive experience.”

“My Condition Support nurse acts as an outstanding sounding board.”
– Richard, program participant

Want to know more about health reform and how it affects you?
The Affordable Care Act (also known as the ACA or Obamacare) has the potential to improve access to healthcare, although challenges remain. You can learn more about coverage options by visiting our websites:
• PacificSource.com/reform
• HealthcareLawGuide.com

You’re also welcome to contact a PacificSource Coverage Advisor with questions related to reform. They can be reached toll-free at (855) 330-2792 or by email at reform@pacificsource.com.
Easy Crockpot Chili

Servings: makes about 10 one-cup servings.

Ingredients
1 pound ground chicken
6 cloves minced garlic
1 large white onion, chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 can pinto beans, no juice
1 can kidney beans, no juice
1 15-oz. can “no salt added” tomato sauce
1 can “no salt added” diced tomatoes, with juice
1 can chilies, with juice
1 large green pepper, chopped
1½ teaspoon ground cumin
4 tablespoon chili powder
½ teaspoon oregano
Pepper to taste

Instructions
2. Rinse beans and place in crockpot. (Rinsing the beans decreases sodium content by 41%.*
3. Add chilies, tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, and diced green pepper to the beans.
4. Add chicken and spices, and mix thoroughly.
5. Slow cook at 200˚F for 8-10 hours.

* Chef Kyle Shadix, MS, RD; Today’s Dietician, vol. 12, no. 1, p. 62

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size: 1 cup
Servings: 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
<th>Calories 190</th>
<th>Calories From Fat 50</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Daily Value</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>6g</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
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<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>40mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>370mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>23g</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>7g</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>7g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>13g</td>
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Vitamin A 25% • Vitamin C 40%
Calcium 6% • Iron 15%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.