Sleep
Women's Health Week 2017

Who doesn't love a good night's sleep or a weekend sleep in!?

Sleep actually plays a vital role in good health and wellbeing throughout our life.

**Getting enough quality sleep**

Getting enough quality sleep can help protect our mental health, physical health and quality of life.

During sleep, our brain is preparing for the next day by forming new pathways to help us learn and remember information.

Sleep helps improve our learning, helps us pay attention, make decisions and be creative. Sleep also plays a key role in our physical health through healing and repairing our heart and blood vessels; it helps balance our hormone levels and keeps our immune system healthy.

**For optimal health, the average adult needs around 7-9 hours of sleep each night, do you get that much?**

If you aren't getting enough sleep, over time this sleep deficiency can lead to a number of issues, such as:
- Difficulty in problem solving or making decisions;
- Difficulty in controlling emotions and behaviour;
- Inability to cope with change;
- Depression;
- Increased risk of heart disease, kidney disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and stroke;
- Can lead to an increase in food consumption due to hormone imbalance which may cause weight gain;
- Difficulty in fighting infections.

Did you know that insomnia (the name given to the inability to go to sleep or stay asleep) affects twice as many women than men?

So how can we ensure that we get enough sleep each night?

Here are a few tips:

- Get into a routine, try to go to bed at the same time each night;
- Try not to have any nicotine or caffeine at night as they are stimulants which can interfere with sleep;
- Try not to have a big meal just before going to bed;
- The hour before bed should be a quiet time, turn off all sources of bright artificial light such as phones, computer screens and televisions;
- Take a hot bath or shower before bed or practice some relaxation techniques such as meditation;
- Try to be active during the day as this will help you sleep at night.

More information

Click here to learn about sleep and fatigue.

Other topics for this year's Women's Health Week

Click here to see all the topics for this year's Women's Health Week.