Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

Sleep deficiency can cause you to feel very tired during the day. You may not feel refreshed and alert when you wake up. Sleep deficiency also can interfere with work, school, driving, and social functioning.

How sleepy you feel during the day can help you figure out whether you are having symptoms of problem sleepiness. You might be sleep deficient if you often feel like you could doze off while—

- Sitting and reading or watching TV;
- Sitting still in a public place, such as a movie theater, meeting, or classroom;
- Riding in a car for an hour without stopping;
- Sitting and talking to someone;
- Sitting quietly after lunch; or
- Sitting in traffic for a few minutes.

Sleep deficiency can cause problems with learning, focusing, and reacting. You may have trouble making decisions, solving problems, remembering things, controlling your emotions and behavior, and coping with change. You may take longer to finish tasks, have a slower reaction time, and make more mistakes.

The signs and symptoms of sleep deficiency may differ between children and adults.

Children who are sleep deficient might be overly active and have problems paying attention. They also might misbehave, and their school performance can suffer. Sleep-deficient children may feel angry and impulsive, have mood...
Are You Getting Enough Sleep?  
continued from page 1

swings, feel sad or depressed, or lack motivation.

You may not notice how sleep deficiency affects your daily routine. A common myth is that people can learn to get by on little sleep with no negative effects. However, research shows that getting good-quality sleep at the right times is vital for mental health, physical health, quality of life, and safety.

To find out whether you are sleep deficient, try keeping a sleep diary for a couple of weeks. Write down how much you sleep each night, how alert and rested you feel in the morning, and how sleepy you feel during the day.

Compare the amount of time you sleep each day with the average amount of sleep recommended for your age group, as shown in the chart under the heading: “How Much Sleep Is Enough?” If you feel very sleepy often, and efforts to increase your sleep do not help, talk with your doctor.

You can find a sample sleep diary on page 60 in the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute publication, Your Guide to Healthy Sleep.

Article from NIH Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. For more information, go to www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/sleep-deprivation-and-deficiency.

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“Imagination is more important than knowledge.

Knowledge is limited.

IMAGINATION encircles the world.”

~ ALBERT EINSTEIN

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The Cycle of Addiction

ADDITION is a unique illness in many ways. It can develop for a number of reasons, and it impacts individuals in various ways. Also, addiction can be formulaic in some respects. Take a look at the stages in the cycle of addiction, and you will be better equipped to halt the cycle and free yourself from drug or alcohol dependence.

**Stage 1: Abusing the Substance**

Addiction cannot happen until you start abusing the substance. In the case of alcohol, that might mean binge drinking. For prescription drugs, it might mean taking larger doses than necessary.

At first, these actions might seem relatively harmless. Over time, however, they can begin the cycle of addiction.

**Stage 2: Losing Control Over Use**

Chronic or improper use of certain substances can cause serious problems. Some people might experience a change in tolerance, which then translates to greater consumption. More important, some people will begin focusing on their substance abuse. This is especially true for anyone with addictive behaviors.

Once substance abuse becomes the priority, then the problem can worsen quickly. Work, friends, and family will become increasingly less important as the substance abuse increases in appeal.

**Stage 3: Addiction**

The third stage is the official development of an addiction. If a person develops an addiction, then they will not have the power to cut back or quit without dangerous consequences. However, quitting in a detox setting, under licensed medical care and supervision, often is the only way to recover once you have reached this stage.

Many people struggling with addiction have placed their substance abuse on a pedestal. Cravings and temptations are exclusively for their choice of drug or alcohol, and nothing in life can take priority over procuring and abusing the substance.

**Stage 4: Choosing Recovery**

The best way to break free from the cycle of addiction is to choose high-quality treatment. However, not all recovery options are the same. Some short-lived programs get you sober, but they will not help you maintain that sobriety for a lifetime.

If you are serious about ending the cycle once and for all, then be sure to choose a comprehensive strategy for recovery. In almost every case, that includes some kind of substance-abuse treatment. Through individual and group therapies, as well as dual-diagnosis support when necessary, it is possible to commit to ongoing recovery that lasts a lifetime.

**Stage 5: Relapse Into the Cycle of Addiction**

Unfortunately, many patients will not get the right level of care during addiction recovery. More than half of all those individuals who receive some form of professional addiction treatment will relapse eventually. This can perpetuate the cycle, leading to substance abuse and a renewed addiction.

The good news is that relapse does not mean the end of recovery. While it is a setback, those who relapse can still find the lifelong sobriety they deserve. The right treatment may make it easier to break free from your addictive behaviors once and for all.

Article from Ashley Addiction Treatment's website, used with permission. They are located in Havre de Grace, Maryland. For more information, on their programs, call 866-313-6307 or go to their website.
What is medical marijuana?

The term medical marijuana refers to using the whole, unprocessed marijuana plant or its basic extracts to treat symptoms of illness and other conditions. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not recognized or approved the marijuana plant as medicine.

However, scientific study of the chemicals in marijuana, called cannabinoids, has led to two FDA-approved medications that contain cannabinoid chemicals in pill form. Continued research may lead to more medications.

Because the marijuana plant contains chemicals that may help treat a range of illnesses and symptoms, many people argue that it should be legal for medical purposes. In fact, a growing number of states have legalized marijuana for medical use.

How might cannabinoids be useful as medicine?

Currently, the two main cannabinoids from the marijuana plant that are of medical interest are Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and Cannabidiol (CBD).

THC can increase appetite and reduce nausea. Also, THC may decrease pain, inflammation (swelling and redness), and muscle-control problems. Unlike THC, CBD is a cannabinoid that does not make people “high.” These drugs are not popular for recreational use, because they are not intoxicating.

They may be useful in reducing pain and inflammation, controlling epileptic seizures, and possibly even treating mental illness and addictions. Many researchers, including those funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), are continuing to explore the possible uses of THC, CBD, and other cannabinoids for medical treatment.

For instance, recent animal studies have shown that marijuana extracts may help kill certain cancer cells and reduce the size of others. Evidence from one cell culture study with rodents suggests that purified extracts from whole-plant marijuana can slow the growth of cancer cells from one of the most serious types of brain tumors. Research in mice showed that treatment with purified extracts of THC and CBD, when used with radiation, increased the cancer-killing effects of the radiation.

Scientists also are conducting preclinical and clinical trials with marijuana and its extracts to treat symptoms of illness and other conditions, such as diseases that affect the immune system, including—

- HIV/AIDS
- multiple sclerosis (MS), which causes gradual loss of muscle control
- inflammation
- pain
- seizures
- substance-use disorders
- mental disorders

Read more about NIH’s marijuana research: Marijuana and Cannabinoid Research at NIDA; NIH Research on Marijuana and Cannabinoids at www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/marijuana/nih-research-marijuana-cannabinoids.

Article from National Institute on Drugs and Alcohol.

For more information, go to www.drugabuse.gov/publications/finder/t/160/DrugFacts.

Changes to the Employee Assistance Program

MCPS PROUDLY EXPANDED its Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services to employees and their family members with the launch of an EAP hybrid this year.

So, what is an EAP “hybrid”?

A hybrid EAP blends the benefits of both in-house and external programs: counseling services both on and off site, work-life services such as legal and financial referrals, workshops on relevant topics, rapid response to crises, supervisory consultations, and 24/7 accessibility.

With the EAP hybrid, employees and family members now can choose between obtaining services through either the in-house EAP or KEPRO, the external EAP contractor. Here are some highlighted differences between the two:

1. In-house EAP: Up to eight counseling sessions, with a focus on workplace issues, emotional and personal conflicts, stress or life crises, couples and family problems, and any other issue that may be impacting you. Generally, face-to-face sessions are scheduled during normal business hours, at the Rockville location. Legal services through MCEA and SEIU offer a 30 percent discount in addition to a free ½ hour consultation. Call us for more information.

2. KEPRO EAP: Up to six counseling sessions, with the convenience of scheduling face-to-face sessions with an EAP counselor in close proximity to where you work or live and with expanded hours. Referral to an array of work-life services, with a 25 percent discount on legal services and 24-hour accessibility to intake and scheduling appointments.

Of course, confidentiality is guaranteed, whether you reach out to the in-house EAP or to KEPRO EAP. The
only exceptions to confidentiality in-
clude threat of harm to self or others,
child abuse, and elder abuse. We know
that life can be challenging and that
our employees are our most valuable
resource. When an individual gets help
with a personal or work problem, job
performance improves, home life
improves, and everyone benefits.

In-House EAP:
240-314-1040
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/
departments/eap/
KEPRO EAP:
866-496-9599
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
www.EAPHELPlink.com
Company Code: MCPS

“Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be
understood. Now is the time to understand
more, so that we may fear less.” — Marie Curie

Workplace Bullying
According to MCPS Regulation ACH-RA,
Workplace Bullying, workplace bullying means repeated, deliberate,
hurtful mistreatment, either direct or
indirect, whether verbal, physical, or
otherwise, conducted by one or more
employees against another employee
or employees, and that is
• Motivated by any individual’s
  actual or perceived personal
  characteristic as defined in Board
  of Education Policy ACA, Nondis-
  crimination, Equity, and Cultural
  Proficiency; or
• Otherwise threatening or
  intimidating; and that occurs
  at the workplace and/or in the
  course of employment; or
• Is sufficiently severe or pervasive
  so as to alter the conditions of the
  individual’s working environment.

These behaviors may occur in person
or via any means of communication,
including electronic communication,
whether the conduct or communica-
tion occurs on or off MCPS property.
Workplace bullying is not limited to
supervisor-to-subordinate conduct and
may include peer-to-peer or subordi-
nate-to-supervisor conduct. Examples
of workplace bullying may include acts
of humiliation, intimidation, or sabo-
tage of work performance. Workplace
bullying may adversely impact an
individual’s physical or psychological
well-being or work performance and
advancement opportunities.

If you are being bullied, or are not
sure that what you are experiencing at
work is bullying, consider contacting
the MCPS in-house EAP as a confiden-
tial starting point to find out what your
options are. We can be reached at
240-314-1040 or via Outlook at
eap@mcpsmd.org.

Q. I’m a supervisor. I see that you are now working
with a contracted EAP. If I want to make a refer-
ral or need to consult with the EAP about an
employee issue, who should I contact about this?

A. While we are now working as a hybrid EAP (see page 3),
management referrals are still done as they have been done
before. You should contact the in-house EAP, where you can
share your concerns in a confidential conversation with one of
our staff. You can reach us at 240-314-1040. For more
information on making a referral to the EAP, you can check
out our supervisor manual: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/
uploadedFiles/departments/eap/homepage/0143%2018_EAP_
HandbookForSupervisors_web.pdf). Also, you can take our
online supervisor training.

Do you have a question for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?
Send your questions to Jeff Becker at Jeffrey_Becker@mcpsmd.org or via
the Pony mail.

A Healthy Outlook!
To help employees with
troubling issues before they
become overwhelming.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE
 SPECIALISTS: Jeff Becker,
Robyn Rosenbauer

EAP
45 West Gude Drive, Suite 1300
Rockville, Maryland 20850
phone: 240-314-1040
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/
departments/eap

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or advice of a qualified health professional. For
further questions or help with specific problems
or personal concerns, contact your employee
assistance professional.

You may contact us or send your questions
and comments to Jeffrey_Becker@mcpsmd.org

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confidential.

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