



Family Physical Therapy Services, Inc.

Our Family Cares

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Sleep It Off

By Dan Baram, PTA, CSCS

What if I told you that you could improve your health, your ability to perform any and all activities, and your overall quality of life AND you could make all these changes for free, without committing to some crazy over the top exercise program or changing what you eat? Well it's all as simple as catching some extra zzzzz's. That's right, you can make dramatic changes in your life simply by sleeping more. "How much?" you ask...7.5-8 hours per night is what you need.



According to Dr. Kirk Parsley, a former Navy seal and competitive athlete turned physician who is an expert on sleep, the average American is sleep deprived (check him out at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7s9C_8-OoxI or on the podcast *Barbell Shrugged* (go to www.barbellshrugged.com and search for Episode 158)). Dr. Parsley says the 2 biggest obstacles to correcting this are 1) we are unaware we have

a problem with sleep deprivation and 2) when the problem is discussed we don't believe it is a problem. In fact, we admire those that seem to perform without sleep. But the facts are that sleep deprivation will degrade your health and your performance.

Studies show that if you are sleep deprived your brain functions similarly to someone who has had a traumatic brain injury (a concussion on the low end, severe head trauma on the high end). (On the plus side, after my daughter was born and I was up every 2-3 hours each night feeding her or changing her diaper I could use this fact if my abilities at work were lacking!) Dr. Parsley likens sleep deprivation to the effects of alcohol. Other sleep studies show that people gravitate to sleeping 7.5-8.0 hours per night when they are allowed to.

Knowing how much sleep you need and getting it are different things though, right? See this month's insert for tips on getting consistently better sleep.

You can now find us on Instagram and Twitter

Thanks to our newest staff member Amanda, you can now find FPTS on Instagram and Twitter. Please take a moment to check us out and keep up with the latest news at FPTS.



<https://twitter.com/FamilyPTS>



<https://www.instagram.com/familypts/>



New for 2016

We are now providers of:

Minuteman Health

Tufts Health Plan

Therapeutic Work Solutions Info Corner

By Steve Lisowe, MSPT

Pillow Talk

Here's a line many of us have heard from spouses or friends: "I have the greatest pillow and you need to try it." Thanks to bio-individuality, however, we all benefit from something a little different. The goal of the pillow is to fill the space between the back of the neck and bed, or between the side of the neck and bed (if you're a side sleeper) in order to keep your spine straight. Here's how to improve your current pillow or select a new one.



Working with the old pillow:

To properly fit your old pillow to your neck, lie down on your back (or side). Roll up hand or bath towels and stuff them lengthwise into the lower edge of the pillowcase (the edge toward your legs) along with your pillow. You'll need enough towels to fill the space between the natural curves of your neck and the mattress. If you're a side sleeper, have someone look at you from behind to see that your spine looks parallel to the ground. If not, make adjustments to the amount of support you have.

Selecting a new pillow:

If you've had your pillow for several years, or if you can fold it in half and it has no rebound to it, you might want a new one. Look for one that matches the shape of your neck and is recommended for your preferred sleep position. There are many options in pillow materials including foam, latex, water or air filled, and down. Each lends itself to a different level of firmness, support, heat retention, circulation, and durability. A high thread count (400+) pillow or a latex pillow are good standard choices. Pillows also come in contoured shapes. If you find one that matches the support you actually need, it could be a great fit for you. Good quality memory foam usually works well for side sleepers as it's typically denser and can support the weight of the head. Be careful with pillows that are meant for one position, however, if you move around a lot. Most importantly, try the pillow out in the store before you buy it.

Pre & Postnatal Info Corner

By Effie Koustas, MPT

Mommy Needs Her Rest

After many long days, all you're looking forward to is going to sleep. Usually, you'd get right into bed and pass out. However, when you are pregnant that may not be the case, especially if you are a stomach sleeper, for obvious reasons.

Other positions, which used to be comfortable, may not be any more either from increased pressure points due to the additional weight you're carrying around or from joints that get overstretched. During pregnancy, your body produces hormones that will allow your pelvic joints to move (thank goodness!) during delivery but may make other joints ache if they are stretched or not supported adequately (and is why it is important to stay strong throughout your pregnancy).

In addition, if you lie flat on your back you risk compressing the inferior vena cava (the large vein returning blood to the heart). This could result in high blood pressure and less blood flowing from the heart in the mother-to-be, which translates into decreased blood flow to the developing baby as well. It should be completely avoided in late pregnancy.

The tips in this month's insert will help keep you off your back and aligned while you sleep, and will help promote a more restful, comfortable night's sleep



Helping Hands Honoree: a very special thanks goes out to this month's Triple H winner:

Maureen Manning. Without the unending support of our patients and their generosity in referring their friends and family to FPTS, we wouldn't have the honor and privilege of serving so many people in need.

Through the Helping Hands Program, our past and present patients, friends, and colleagues, have an opportunity to win a gift certificate to a business simply by referring new patients to our facility.

Start your new year off right and give a gift of health to a family member, friend or colleague in need.

It's the greatest compliment you could give us and the best way to show your loved ones how much you care!

The Princess and the Pea: Find the Right Mattress for You

By Tom Fontana, MSPT



People often ask what kind of mattress they should get. They might as well ask what ice cream flavor or pizza topping they should get. Because people's resting muscle tone, sensitivity to pressure, ligamentous laxity, weight and body shape (their "bio-individuality") varies, not to mention which position(s) they like to sleep in, it is impossible to recommend one product.

This is somewhat liberating (you're not a freak for not liking what worked for your best friend) but is also less convenient than a simple recommendation. Below, we'll give you the tools to pick out the right mattress for you.

First, it's useful to understand why laying on a mattress can be uncomfortable. The pressure between your body pushing down and the mattress pushing up is felt where your body contacts the mattress. This may overcome the pressure in your blood vessels, resulting in "ischemia" where your tissues don't get enough oxygen/nutrients. Tossing and turning at night relieves this pressure.

Your contact points also may place unwanted forces on your joints. For instance, if you are a side sleeper who happens to have wide hips and shoulders, your midsection may sag down leading to back pain.

You're looking for a mattress that simultaneously is soft enough so it doesn't cause ischemia and firm enough to support you—no small feat!

Visit a store with a variety of mattresses (i.e., different materials and/or different manufacturers). Don't get too caught up in the types of mattress—focus on comfort.

Lay on a number of mattresses for a few seconds or minutes. The ones that feel awful within that time frame are OUT. By noting the features of those you did and didn't like, you'll learn what to gravitate toward. Then, lay on each of your finalists for up to 20 minutes (the time it may take to develop ischemia) in your preferred sleep positions. Those that remain comfortable are likely to give you a good night's sleep. This is a time-consuming process but is well worth it. (Cont. on page 3)

(The Princess and the Pea: cont. from page 2) Finally, if you sleep with a partner, go mattress-shopping with him/her! If you agree on the same kind, consider yourself lucky (remember the pizza-topping argument). If not, you might find one that is not THE most comfortable for either but is acceptable to both. Alternatively, some mattresses have different firmnesses on each side or you could splurge for the Sleep Number bed where you can customize the firmness to your liking.

Sweet Dreams zzzz

Notes From Our Extended Family:



"I have had a very long standing relationship with Family PT. This was my first time working with Effie and also my first time with a new joint (shoulder). Both experiences were wonderful! After many years I now have use of a previously unusable arm thanks to a new joint and Effie's wonderful pushing and guiding through the process of strengthening my new shoulder and surrounding muscles. I am now working on my own and hope I can live up to Effie's expectations. Thank you Effie!"

~ Joan Shute

"I came to Family Physical Therapy Services after dislocating my shoulder in an accident at home. I was in a sling for 10 days and then two days after I was out, I dislocated it again, wiping off a table. After the sling came off the first time, I was feeling pretty good and was using my arm as much as I thought I could, but after the second injury, I was afraid to do anything! Tom and Dan taught me exercises and monitored my progress and through their work, I got my confidence back. The exercises were easy to do at home either with things I had or with inexpensive equipment. They always asked how things were going at home - what could I do that was new, what was still a challenge. Now, 3 months after the accident I can do everything I need to do. I will continue to stretch and strengthen, but I have no doubt that I would be in a much different, much worse place, without my time at Family Physical Therapy. Thank you!!"

~ Ann Noyes



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ARE YOU DEALING WITH THE POST HOLIDAY BLUES?

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- Did you eat too much over the holidays and need to lose a few pounds?
- Are you having trouble sleeping?

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Tips for Getting Better Sleep



1. Set a bedtime alarm

When it goes off, so too should all the lights and electronics. No more email or YouTube, no more TV, no more work. The day is over.

2. Have a sleep routine

For about an hour before bed, do something that relaxes you. Take a bath. Stretch. Read. Meditate. Put on pajamas and listen to Al Green records. Sip herbal tea. It really doesn't matter what you do, as long as you find it relaxing. At that point you'll be ready for bed.



3. Keep the bedroom clear of buzz

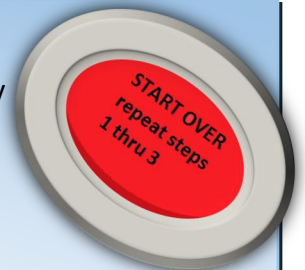
You don't want any distractions in the bedroom when you're trying to sleep. No flashing green lights. No beeping or buzzing notifications. Get all of the electronics and gizmos out of your bedroom. If you need an alarm, set it on the ground or away out of view.



4. If you can't fall asleep, take a break

Don't toss and turn in bed for extended periods—that will only associate it with unrest and frustration. If you've been awake for twenty minutes, go into another room and repeat a few minutes of your sleep routine to settle down again before returning to bed.

It might seem counterintuitive—you'll feel like you are losing sleep this way but you'll likely fall asleep again faster and your overall quality of sleep will be better.



Good luck, and if you dozed off during this article then I guess it already helped! Feel free to use it over and over again. Happy sleeping.

Positioning For More Comfortable Sleep During Pregnancy

Sleeping on your side, preferably on your left for optimal circulation to the baby, can be eased with putting a pillow between your knees. The pillow should be placed between knees and ankles. A small pillow can also be added at your waist to decrease side bending of your spine.

A pillow behind you can also act as a reminder to keep you in side lying throughout the night. If you follow the above suggestions, you should be able to avoid going into a “frog leg” position, which puts the body in an asymmetrical position.



Semi-supine position is a great alternative if both hips are painful. While laying on your back, place a pillow under your right side to promote leaning to the left. This helps to promote blood flow as you favor your left side. To maintain neutral spinal alignment, you also want to place one to two pillows under your knees.



Call our office at 644.8334 to schedule a FREE 20-minute consult with Effie, our pre & postnatal specialist.