

# SLEEP AND WELLNESS

## Boston University Student Health Services

### Are you building up sleep debt?

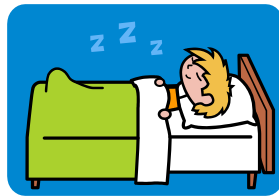
By missing out on just 1 hour of sleep at night we immediately see the effects of sleep deprivation.

On average most Americans only get 7 hours of sleep a night when we should be getting up to 8 hours of sleep a night.

Sleep deprivation causes daytime fatigue, poor concentration, irritable mood, and increases stress.

The long term sleep deprivation can affect both our overall health and mood.

Getting enough sleep at night allows our brain to consolidate and retain more information from our day!



#### Try This Before Bedtime

3 Minutes to Stress Relief  
Breathing exercises are a quick and easy way to clear your mind, release tension in your body and help you to feel relaxed in order to fall asleep faster

- 1) Sit up right in a comfortable position
- 2) Focus on your present state, block out intrusive thoughts
- 3) Pay attention to your breathing, take a deep breath in through your nose
- 4) Exhale through your mouth lasting twice as long as your inhale
- 5) Continue for 2-5 minutes

### Better sleep hygiene tips:

**Sleep hygiene tips are simple guidelines to follow for more restful sleep. Good sleep hygiene will increase daytime energy and prevents disordered sleep.**

- Create a sleep diary of what time you are going to sleep, when you wake up, and how many times a night you wake. This will help you become more vigilant about your sleep patterns and discover the factors that may be keeping you up at night.
- Before sleep, do one activity that can put your mind at rest and is relaxing. Like a breathing exercise (above) or reading for fun.
- An empty or full stomach, alcohol, caffeine and exercise close to the time of sleep can interrupt your ability to fall asleep.
- Try not to nap during the day, but if you must nap make sure it is shorter than an hour. Any nap longer than that can also interrupt your ability to fall asleep at night.
- Go to bed and get up at the same times everyday, and try not to sleep in too late past your regularly weekly schedule.
- If you find yourself tossing and turning do not stay in bed. After 20-30 minutes get out of bed and engage in a boring activity. Get back in bed when you're feeling sleepy again.
- Face your alarm clock away from you so you don't worry about passing time.
- When its time for sleep, keep your room as quiet and dark as possible. If you have roommates or neighbors that prevent this try using ear plugs and bedtime masks.
- If you continue having sleep problems consult your doctor or a counselor at BU Student Health Services for more help.