

# Workplace Wellness



## Protect Your Resilience by Improving Your Sleep Patterns

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Many of us take our sleep for granted. We get so busy with our work commitments and our family responsibilities that sometimes our sleep becomes neglected and an afterthought. But what if I told you we are damaging our well-being and health by not better prioritizing our bedtime?

It's difficult for many of us, with what feels like overwhelming schedules at times, to put ourselves first. We come up with excuses such as "I don't have time" or "I need to finish this one last project." Soon these excuses become the norm.

Improving our sleep and bedtime habits makes us mentally sharper, emotionally calmer, and gives our brains and bodies much-needed time to recharge and reset for days ahead.

So, what is healthy sleep? When we talk about healthy sleep we mean aiming for an average of seven to eight hours of sleep per night. But even if you tend to fall asleep the second you lie down that is not necessarily a good sign either! You are falling asleep quickly because you really are sleep deprived.

If anyone finds that their sleep is not how it used to be or has decreased in hours, then I recommend consulting your physician. Three common causes of sleep problems are working too close to bedtime, sleep disordered breathing, and unstable sleep patterns.

**My top three recommendations for ensuring a healthier sleep are as follows:**

- 1. Make sure you really are getting seven to eight hours of sleep each night.** Look at your schedule realistically. What time did you go to sleep last night and what time did you wake up today?
- 2. Protect the hour before this seven- to eight-hour night** by doing something relaxing. We need to send the message to our brain that we're going to bed soon.
- 3. Trick your brain when you wake up in the middle of the night** and you find yourself unable to fall back to sleep quickly. Rather than just tossing and turning in bed for hours, do something boring so you feel drowsy again and your brain knows it's sleeping time.

We spend one-third of our lives sleeping. That's a lot of time. We all need to make our sleep a priority so we can tackle each new day successfully.

I spoke with the Canadian Dental Association this summer on CDA Oasis about healthy sleep and its impact on our overall health and well-being. For the full video and more details on the strategies to help you sleep better, visit <https://vimeo.com/347336921>

