Get in the mood.... to sleep.

We’ve all heard it a million times that you need to get your eight hours every night. But few know the actual health risks associated with decreased amounts of sleep (and there are many). The risks for diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and obesity are all increased by not getting enough sleep. This increased risk is related to increased blood pressure, increased inflammation, and impaired blood glucose control associated with inadequate sleep. In addition to all of these health risks, a person with inadequate sleep also suffers from increased stress, irritability, decreased focus, and decreased productivity. All of these factors directly relate to workplace performance.

“When stress is more related to mundane issues such as being overworked and thus overwhelmed, I have found that no matter what happens, I have to protect my 8 hours of sleep. I cannot overemphasize enough the difference it has made for me, once I acknowledged the importance of a good night’s rest.”

-Anita Carrasco, November Employee Spotlight...continued on page 2

So what can you do about it?

Sleep hygiene is a combination of habits and practices that are conducive to sleeping well on a regular basis. The following tips have been shown to help people fall asleep faster and stay asleep during the night:

- Avoid caffeine, sweets, and working out after dinner time.
- Stop looking at electronic devices at least one hour before bedtime.
- Get in a relaxed state before bed. Read a book, journal, deep breath, use lavender oil, etc.
- Make the bedroom a sanctuary for sleep. Avoid working, doing homework, etc. in the bedroom.
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule if possible; go to bed and wake up within the same half hour each day.
- If you are taking a long time to fall asleep, do not just lay in bed. Get up, go do a relaxing activity for 15 minutes, and then try again.
Eat Well Be Well Printable Recipe Card
Just print this page, cut, and fold for a 3x5 recipe card

Caprese Avocado Toast
• 2 ripe avocados
• 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
• Sea salt and black pepper, to taste
• 4 slices whole grain bread, toasted
• 4 ounces fresh mozzarella, sliced and cut into pieces, to fit the bread
• 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
• 1/4 cup basil leaves, roughly chopped
• Balsamic Vinegar, for drizzling

Directions
1. Cut the avocados in half, remove pit, and scoop the flesh into a small bowl. Add the lemon juice, sea salt, and black pepper, to taste. With a fork, mash the ingredients together, keeping the texture slightly chunky.

2. Spread the mashed avocado evenly onto toasted bread slices. Top with fresh mozzarella slices, tomatoes, and basil. Season with additional salt and pepper, if desired. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar and serve immediately.

Employee Spotlight
Anita Carrasco
Professor of Anthropology

What is your favorite stress reduction technique?
“My favorite stress reduction technique lately has been what is now called mindfulness. The way I practice it is by allowing myself a brief 15 minutes a day to stop and examine your priorities, think about whether your ambitions are reasonable in light of available time to accomplish everything on your long to do list, to let your self feel fear, envy, anger, or frustration in silence and then examine why you think you feel the way you do.”

What is one habit you have changed over the last year?
“Exercise. I try to exercise 45 minutes three times a week. I almost never can do it. But at least I am trying and that’s a start.”

Progressive Muscle Relaxation
Check out this Exercise
PMR. During this exercise, or relaxation technique your mind is focused on tensing and relaxing each muscle group in your body. By paying attention to how your muscles feel between tensing and relaxing, you become more mindful of how your body may feel when stressed or overwhelmed. It doesn’t matter where you start on your body; your toes or neck. Tense your muscles for at least five seconds and then relax for 30 seconds, and repeat.

The Tech Advantage
Check out this App
Sleep Cycle Alarm Clock:
This alarm clock wants to wake you up without making you feel groggy by tracking your REM cycle. You choose the time you need to wake up, and the alarm clock will wake you up during the lightest sleep phase of your sleep, so you feel well-rested to start your day.

The app uses sound and vibration analysis in order to track your sleep cycles. Will sync with Apple’s Health App.

Eat Well Be Well

Capsicum and Avocado Toast

Fold on the dotted line

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